

AN APPROACH TO DESIGN VISUALS FOR ARCHETYPES BASED ON  
CHARACTER ARCHETYPE TAXONOMIES

A Thesis

by

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## ABSTRACT

In this thesis, I present a method to construct visual designs for character archetypes. Using this method, I have developed a set of encyclopedic references for a wide variety of archetypes to demonstrate the power of my approach.

While there are many professional examples of successful character designs, there seems to be little academic research done in standardizing a method to achieve the results. In this thesis, I present a formal method to construct character designs. My method is based on visual semiotics that is used for creating clear meaning behind design choices while still retaining a sense of aesthetic through principles of artistic design.

The method can be summarized as follows: 1) describing a model via a compelling real world reference, and capturing generic likeness of the model in order to evaluate visual cues from a variety of proportional changes 2) introducing personality drawing from indexical signs, and emphasizing visual appeal through the addition and/or omission of props, and 3) encyclopedia showcasing the visual results from using this methodology, as well as a breakdown of why the design choices were made.

## DEDICATION

To my mother and my grandfather.

## CONTRIBUTORS AND FUNDING SOURCES

This work was supported by Texas A&M University and a thesis committee consisting of Professor Ergun Akleman and Professor Joshua Hicks and Professor Takashi Yamauchi of the Department of Psychology.

The methodology and results in chapter 3 were conducted by the student and Professor Ergun Akleman and will be published at SIGGRAPH.

All other works conducted for the thesis was completed by the student independently. No outside financial support was provided for this research.



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Motivation and Inspiration

There exists large numbers of verbal descriptions for character archetypes. We understand these words, but there's no formally defined visual definition of these characteristics. Even though there is a wide range of professionally designed archetypes shown in media that one can emulate, tackling this task can be overwhelming without a structured way to approach the design problem [1]. There are design concepts such as shape language that is often discussed among character designers [2, 3, 4], but with the inundation of different opinions and resources on character designing and no academic filter, it is hard to gauge what is actually credible advice. It is also a question whether these concepts that characters designers hold in high regard are actually the most logical starting points in the design process. My approach provides a methodological standard to designing characters with an encyclopedia of 44 archetypes to support the method, invoking principles similar to those used by the masters of animation [1, 5] as well as psychology-based analysis [6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11].

### 1.2 Introduction

On a daily basis, people are able to identify what certain signs are referencing purely through visual cue. This is because these signs were made on the basis of visual semiotics, the study of using visual design to communicate a message [9]. It is also important to apply this theory to designing characters. For instance, we cannot just use a generic representation to portray a character in the same sense that we understand that we cannot just use any representation of a boy and a girl to represent a gendered restroom sign. Providing clear and intentional staging, especially in the silhouette is fundamental to creating readable icons [5] such as symbols like the gendered restroom sign. Sure enough, the concept

of providing clarity had also been defined early on in the history of classic animation [5], which then paved the way for legendary animators like Preston Blair to go on to formalize the design formula of memorable classic animation archetypes [1].

My goal for this research is to create a methodological approach and analysis structure, and present it as an academic resource that character designers can use and reference to in a professional setting and an academic context. While there are many published books that discuss character design, they come from artists varying credentials due to the lack of a standardization on the subject. The proof formulas of my method is structured similar to Blair's breakdown of the classic animation archetypes, only my method emphasizes on psychology-based analysis. Additionally, rather than just covering archetypes pertaining to a very specific style of Western animation, I cover a total of 44 archetypes that consist of well-accepted personality types found in academic psychology studies and literary archetypes. These breakdowns are driven by the following goals:

- Define a logical and objective base model for the character design to be built upon, and analyze how to manipulate proportional bias from this model.
- Provide guidelines for the method of creating a design unique from the base model with deliberate and clear intentions and strong appeal.
- Using the method, have the ability to visualize psychology-based personality types.
- Using the method, have the ability to visualize literary archetypes from specific cultural contexts, with action emphasis, and with off-the-ground posturing.



## 2. BACKGROUND AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Though character design is not often subjected to academic research, there is literature regarding media such as animation and comics that can be relevant to studying character design. Animation and comics are built on the idea of creating characters from scratch, making decisions for every detail in order to ensure the most understandable and favorable design. In this chapter, I examine the works of my predecessors related to my research of design theory and character designing.

### 2.1 Designing by Simplicity

In discussion surrounding the principles of character design, the concept of shape language is often the first topic that comes up. This is due to the psychological power that simple shapes can invoke [2, 12] due to the way humans make associations of the forms to real world objects [3]. The reason why shape language is so emphasized among character designers is because the foundation "shape" that a successful character design is built upon is the clearest indicator of what feeling the design is supposed to invoke.

Pixar animation expands on the reason why shape language is effective through the adoption of the concept of simplicity—the principle of "less is more"; the idea that complexity tends to rise as elements specialize to solve specific challenges, while simplicity tends to improve usability of the complex system [4]. This phenomenon relates to the recognition-by-components theory that finds that line drawings are better recognized than actual pictures due to the fact that the simplified forms allows the needed visual information to be in the focus [7]. Disney storyboard artist Lemay also supports this concept in staging figure art, stating that more complex design should only be used with the purpose of indicating "where you want your audience to look" [13]. Although there is much evidence that shape language is a fundamental element to address in character design, it

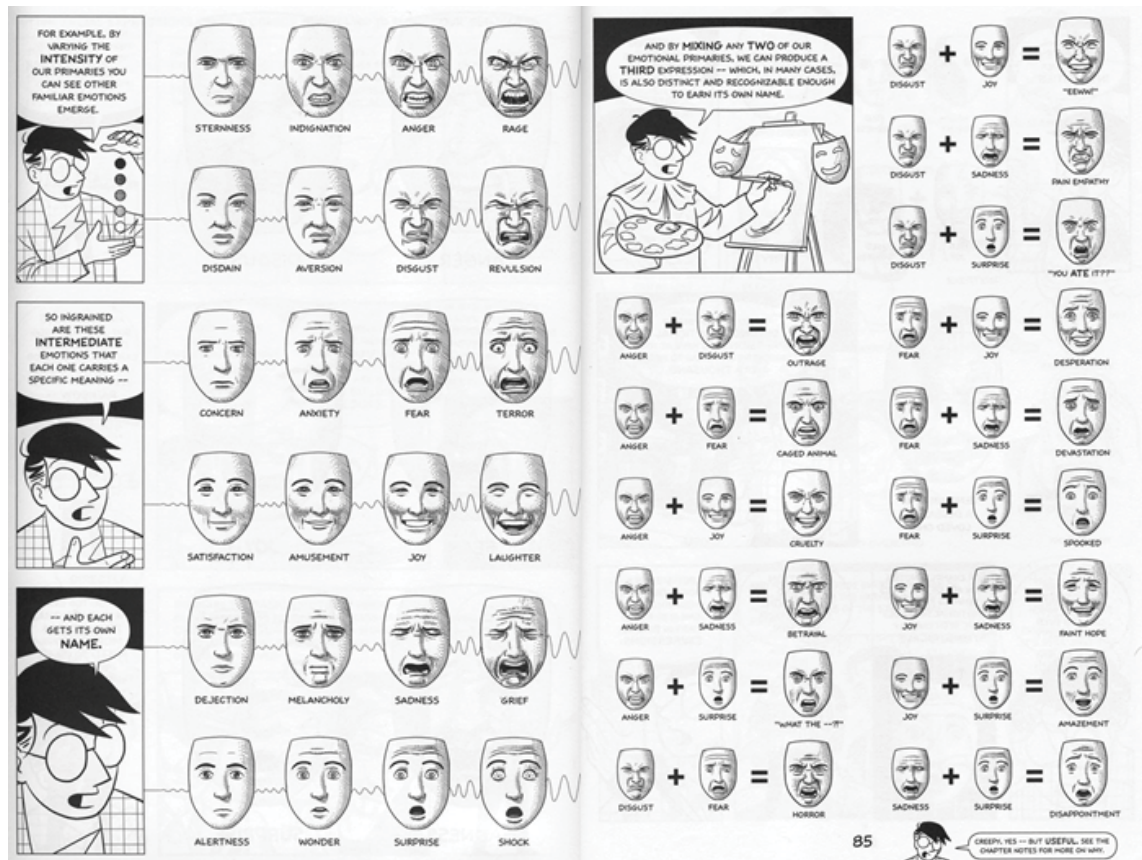
might not necessarily be the most intuitive place for artists to start. It is even difficult to support heavily founding character design under shape language because the description of character can get too complex for single shapes with limited connotations to represent.

## **2.2 Integrating Psychology-based Analysis into Artistic Design**

While there are plenty of classic and modern masters of character designing that aspiring designers can reference, there does not seem to be much academic research on the topic on how to make the critical choices like the masters do. This is an issue because there is also an inundation of published resources from less credible sources that can easily be wrongly considered.

To make the most universally understood artistic choices as possible, it is best to look through the lenses of objective, scientific-based thought. The concepts from visual semiotics can be applied to character designing; for instance, a referenced image or idea, which is the signifier in visual semiotics [9], plays a same role to the real world visual allusion we could start with on a character design. Meanwhile the signified in visual semiotics, the visual representation of the signifier [9], can be thought of as a design element in character designing. Using this framework, it is understood that design elements can fall into the three categories of being iconic, indexical, or symbolic in visual communication [9]; this knowledge can help a character designer make informative choices on clarity of design elements.

Evaluating facial expressions in character design can easily borrow the ideas of psychologist Paul Ekman, the pioneer of the study of emotions and their relation to facial expressions. In Ekman's studies, at least seven fundamental expressions have been found to be universally understood even among isolated populations [8]. This is powerful information to use as it is a designed element that can be understood by a universal audience. Comic artist McCloud vouches for this power, and provides his own visual guide as shown



(a) Reprinted from [14]

Figure 2.1: McCloud's expressions from "Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art"

in Figure 2.1 for a vast amount of possible expressions based on the dialing the intensity of the fundamental expressions and combining expressions [14]. Having all of these proofs for aesthetic concepts gathered in a singular academic source would be immensely useful for character designers to support their artistic choices.

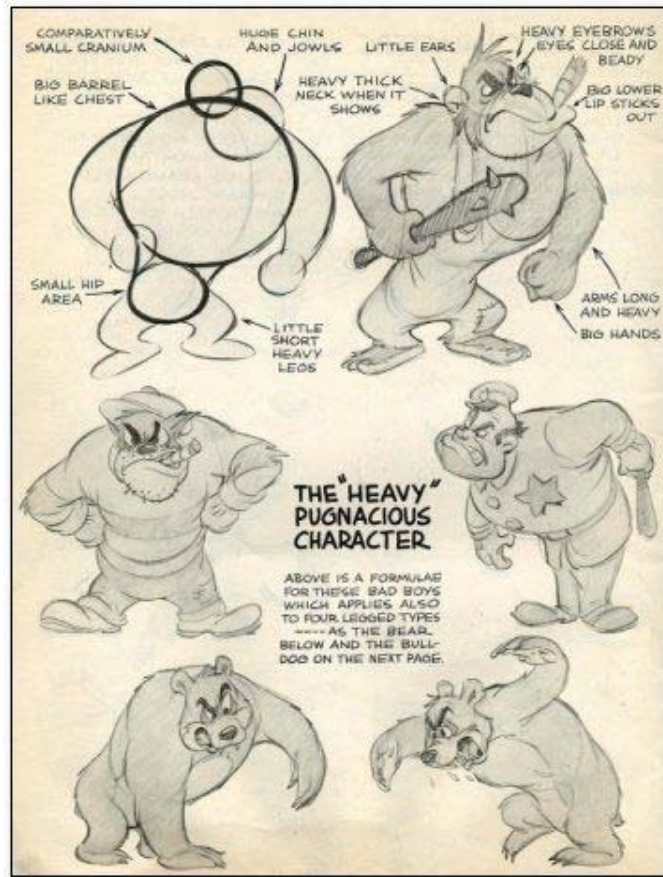
## 2.3 Related Works

From the beginnings of Disney's animated film, the animators often based key characters off of their actual voice actors/actresses or their live action models. This was done to capture the complexities of the acting in their real world reference. Johnston and

Thomas reason that "while the live actor has charisma, the animated drawing has appeal" [5]. While this is historically a principle used to aid aesthetics in character animation, it also feels relevant to serve as a starting point for the fundamental design of characters.

Animator Blair provides quality guidelines and visual examples on the design concepts form, staging, and appeal as shown in Figure 2.2 [1]. The breakdowns he provides for the animation archetypes is useful in presenting a proof for the success of a design. However, Blair only covers a handful of archetypes that are specific to a certain style in Western animation. My research intends to cover character designing that can be applied to all genres. The dark personalities, the big five personalities, and extrovert-introvert personality dimensions [15, 16, 17] are the psychology-based archetypes that provide reference for expressing universally understood personality types. Literary archetypes, while not all are as universally understood as personality types, are still useful in defining characters with commonly seen roles in media work [18, 19]. While designing archetypes, I also borrowing essential concepts on form, staging, and portraying weight from the Lemays's Tuesday Tips, a series of cartooning tips from a professional storyboard artist and character design artist [13, 20], to further aid in visual appeal.

Additionally, it is still limiting to purely base character designing off of the visions of others. Cartoonist and computer graphics researcher Akleman introduced a morphing technique as an accessible method for artists to evaluate proportional bias and ultimately create caricatures [6]. The accessibility of this method can work as good reference point for artists to quickly evaluate meaningful decisions in proportional biases of a character design. Identifying proportional biases can be visually quantified via shape data analysis through comparing similarities and dissimilarities [10]. The psychology behind recognition-by-components theory supports Akleman's process of breaking down the proportion analysis by individual traits as a more intuitive way to develop caricatured proportions [6, 7].



(a) Reprinted from [1]

Figure 2.2: Blair's Heavy archetype breakdown from "Cartoon Animation"

Ultimately, it seems it would be beneficial to have the combination of both a solid methodology and a encyclopedia of archetype design references at hand. In the following chapters, I propose the method on how evaluate proportional bias both by aesthetic and meaning-making. In addition, there is the breakdown for 44 archetype designs that were created using the stated method to serve as a proof of the methodology's useful as well as provide an additional reference point for artists to use on how to analyze character design as well as create successful designs.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, I present my method for designing characters. The method consists of 10 steps as follows:

- **Referencing:** In this step, we construct an initial base model based on a verbal description. The details of this step is explained in section 3.1.
- **Proportions:** In this step, we identify the proper exaggeration for individual physical characteristics of the base model's body. 3.1.1.
- **Relative Proportion:** In this step, we readjust the exaggeration relative to its surrounding proportions. The details of this step is explained in section 3.1.2.
- **Form:** In this step, we use shape language and line stroke to describe character. The details of this step is explained in section 3.2.1.
- **Head and Face:** In this step, we adjust proportions and use facial expression to bring personality. The details of this step is explained in section 3.2.2.
- **Staging:** In this step, we describe character through the clarity of the posture. The details of this step is explained in section 3.2.3.
- **Context:** In this step, we learn what props to omit and simplify, and what props to emphasize. The details of this step is explained in section 3.3.

I describe the steps of the process using "tough police woman" as an example. I first show techniques to identify proportional bias from a base reference to create iconic imagery. Then using these techniques, I explain visual connotations behind different proportional biases, facial expressions, and postures to create a compelling personality via



indexical design elements. Finally, I emphasize visual appeal through symbolic props in order to create not only a compelling personality, but ultimately a unique and appealing character.

### 3.1 Describing a Model by Capturing Genuine Likeness

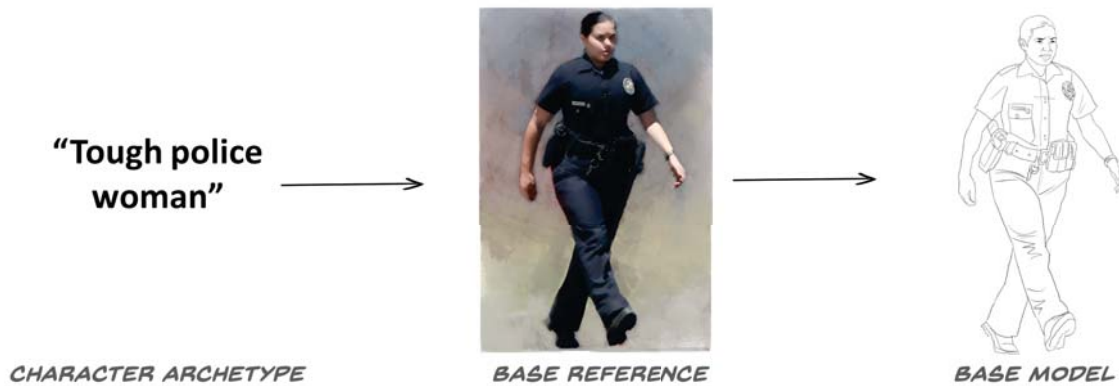


Figure 3.1: An example that demonstrates the steps to describing a model  
(adapted from [21])

In my method, the character design begins with a mere idea, provided as a textual description. This textual description would usually consist of a personality and/or a social role. It is useful as long as it describes a visual personality, from which we can find a base reference. The middle image in the Figure 3.1 shows a base reference I found by searching the term "tough police woman" (a repaint of the photograph done by myself is used to avoid copyright issues). In this stage, the key step is to obtain a base model from this base reference image. This base model describes a visual that a designer intuitively believes to invoke some qualities of a character description. The base model also serves as a starting point of our visual analysis and ultimately a final character design.

Starting from a reference to the real world rather than something abstract is useful to

create an instant sense of complexity, therefore relatability, in a character design [5].

### 3.1.1 Capturing Genuine Likeness

The second step is being able to identify the correct proportional biases, which is the first step to creating meaningful design elements. The process to evaluate proportions works similarly to the art of caricaturing [6]. The base model is divided into sections, and a proportional bias in each section is identified through analyzing which bias direction the base model's proportions contains. The correct iteration exaggerates the proportions in the same direction as the base model's bias direction [10] to capture genuine likeness.

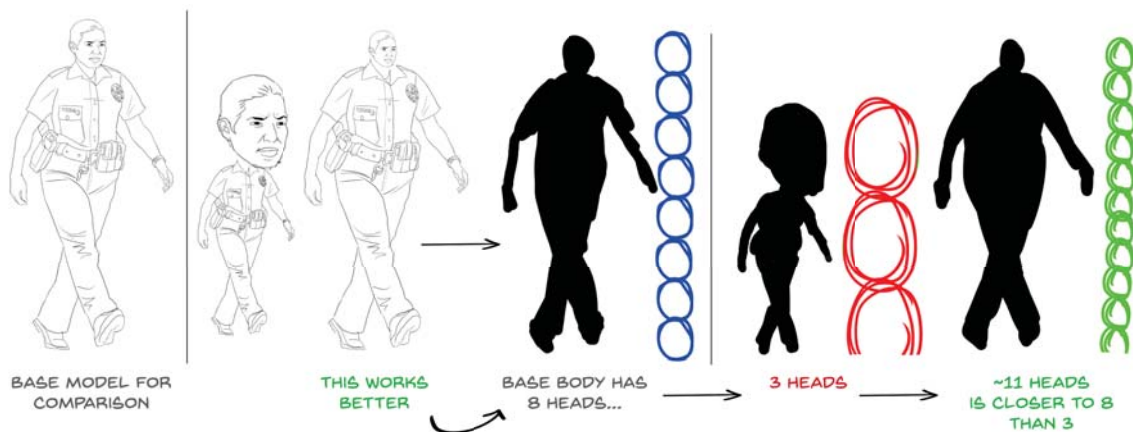


Figure 3.2: Head-to-Body Proportions (silhouette comparison and head stack comparison)  
(adapted from [21])

The first area to iterate on is the head proportion relative to the body. The result should either be an exaggeratedly small or an exaggeratedly large head. Take a look at the two points of the spectrum compared to the base and identify which visually feels more similar to the base model. Looking at the silhouette rather than purely just the literal models helps to take away unnecessary clutter when evaluating the biases. If it is still difficult to evaluate



the bias through silhouette, stack the head across the height of the figure and compare the proportional bias similarities visually and numerically (See Figure 3.2). In this case, it is correct to exaggerate the head towards the smaller end.

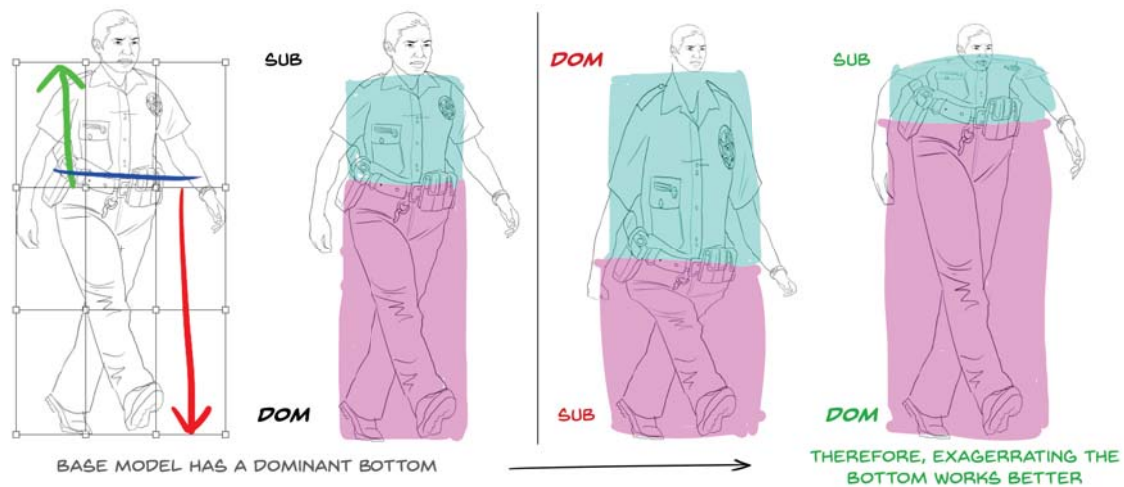


Figure 3.3: Top-Bottom Comparison (divided by the waistline)

After the head-to-body evaluation, the next step is to evaluate whether the body is biased to be top-heavy (torso emphasis) or bottom-heavy (legs-emphasis). The dividing point between the two halves is located at the waistline. The visual cues in evaluating are similar to the first round in that there is a numerical way to compare (which involves comparing which side has more of the thirds that divides up the body), and general spacing that can be eyeballed as shown in Figure 3.3. The body in the last image of the Figure 3.3 has more of emphasis on the legs.

The last area to evaluate is the width of the body, more specifically the torso width (See Figure 3.4). Here we use basic shapes that are commonly associated with the concept of shape language although in this situation, the proportions of the shapes are the only pieces of information that is used. Compare the widths of the general neck area and the general

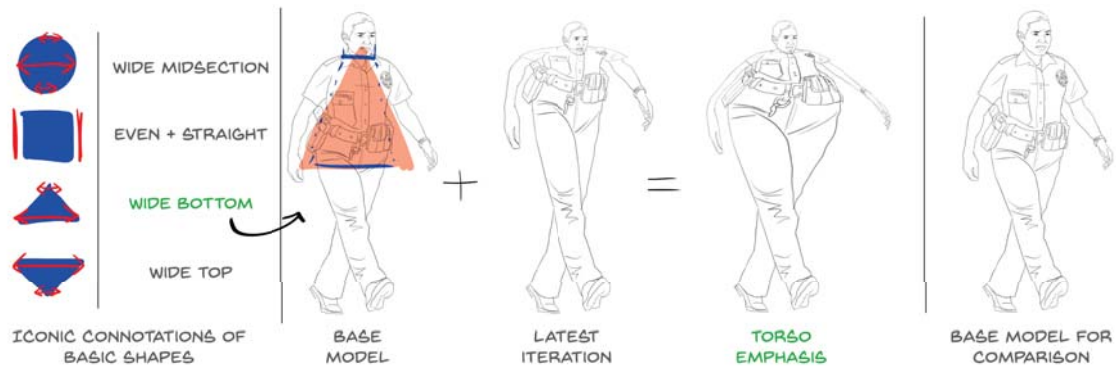


Figure 3.4: Torso Evaluation (through shapes)

crotch area. The neck area of this person is not particularly strong, especially with the fact that the head is quite small, while the hips are noticeably wider. Figure 3.3 demonstrates that the triangle torso seems to be the best fit, especially compared to the straighter torso from the latest iteration until now that would've been the second choice.

### 3.1.2 Relative Proportion

Readjustments to the proportions like shown in Figure 3.3 are usually necessary due to the idea of relative proportion—for example, the head proportions could have been adjusted to likeness in the beginning, but by the time the torso is getting adjusting the torso, the it might negate the necessity of the level of exaggeration in the previous head proportion.

This problem is more likely to happen if distortions are purely made through morphing rather than redrawing. The morphing method is good to use for critical evaluation, especially in an efficient and easily graspable way, but redrawing the character inevitably always produce a more aesthetically controllable outcome.

Also there will be moments where the amount of exaggeration incorrectly; there are body types that naturally have more exaggeration than others, so exaggerating those bodies to a more extreme degree makes sense in capturing likeness, but maybe not so much for a more neutrally proportioned bodies.

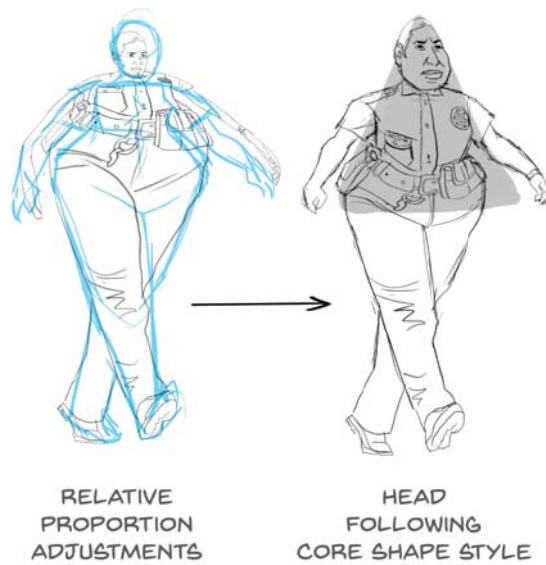


Figure 3.5: Aesthetic proportional adjustments

Hand and feet proportion can be deduced through relative proportion. A large character would have smaller hands and feet to emphasize the body mass while a lanky character would have larger hands and feet to make the body look relatively smaller. A skinny character with smaller hands and feet would appear overall small and delicate, while a large character with smaller hands and feet appear overall large and harsh. In Figure 3.3, we see that the smaller feet and hands already seem to work as the base model has an emphasized body mass.

With the head, at this point I just have it distorted along the core shape; head and facial modifications is explored in greater depth when personality is introduced.

### 3.2 Introducing Personality

The end result of the methodology is a distinct character, so elements outside of the base reference need to be introduced in order to not make the design a mere caricature, and also to ensure the character description is illustrated to its best potential.

The first step is to make sure the shape and line quality supports, and more importantly does not detract from the intended feeling given from the character description. After solidifying the design of the general body, the head and face proportions are evaluated in detail. The last aspect in supporting the personality is getting the staging of the character to amplify the design intent after all the design elements have been figured out.

### 3.2.1 Form



Figure 3.6: Iterations on shape

Previously shape language and keeping shape consistency had been mentioned in creating visually appealing proportions. Shape language also comes with heavy connotative baggage as well, and you would definitely like to make sure that your design intentions are not misconstrued. The circle, square, and triangle are usually cited as the most basic forms of shape language. I prefer to include the inverted triangle as its own shape because it has a fairly different definition to the regular triangle.

Character designer and comic artist Brookes Eggleston explains the circles and general rounded shapes give a feeling of "a warm, cheerful character", the square "a dull,

unamused, and boring", but also "stability", "establishment", and "stubbornness", and the triangle "is devious and conniving" [2, 12].

One can also find information on the shapes by contrasting them with each other. The square has a "static and unmoving" quality in contrast to the more "dynamic and animated" appeal in the triangle due to the contrast of diagonality in the triangle's lines as opposed to the uniform appearance with the square's lines [2]. The circle has the most "relatability" factor [2] due to it being a more naturalistic in contrast to the other shapes, and its similarity to real life associations to roundness like babies.

The triangle has an extra layer of complexity compared to the other two shapes in that it can be flipped at different angles. A bottom heavy triangle differs from a top heavy, also known as an inverted triangle. Bottom heavy triangles can convey a sense of heaviness in weight, while top heavy triangles can give the feeling of agility, the exact opposite appeal [12]. These different appeals from the same shape is created through the difference in how the shape is proportioned.

More complex shapes like flames or teardrops, or combination of shapes, can be used, especially to describe more complex characters. But because of the less universal nature of other shapes, be wary that the shape meaning might not be as immediately readable as the fundamental shapes.

In the case of the "tough police woman", it seems that the square and the inverted triangle shapes are both valid to choose, as shown in Figure 3.7. The square fits the rigid and "establishment" look that goes with the police aspect. The inverted triangle gives off the tough vibe particularly with the broad shoulders. Meanwhile, the circle and the standard triangle are less imposing and more meek looking, which does not fit the character description.

If one specific aspect is called to be emphasized more, a single shape could be chosen in that scenario. However for this case, I want to emphasize both "tough" and "police"

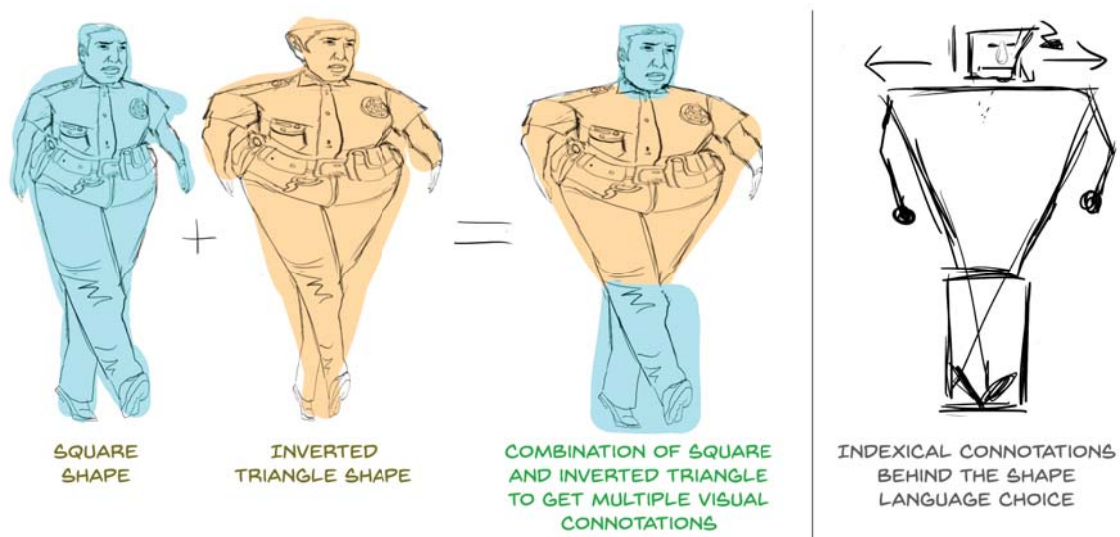


Figure 3.7: Shape language connotations

equally so I opted to combine the shapes.

I gave the character a mostly square head to emphasize "police" aspect, since the emphasis on brains is not a necessary part of the design. I did include slight lean in the upper part of the head towards the gaze direction to show alertness; the jaw however is kept strong, stern look for "tough". The top of the body gets the inverted triangle to give the look of muscle for the "tough", and legs are more square because the the structural, police aspect seemed more relevant to emphasize than agility.

On the subject of stroke form, Lemay brings up the idea of "straight versus curve" to add more contrasting visual interest. He explains that the origins of this aesthetic to be found in natural and man-made anatomical structures, as well as in the aesthetic of how weight acts on objects in life [20]. Though there are some designs that can get away with only one type of stroke, that is often reserved for much more basic and simple archetypes like a one-dimensionally "cute" character (who would consist of curves) or "boring" character (who would consist of straights). Most characters are more complex, and therefore



Figure 3.8: Designing stroke forms in a meaningful manner

also more interesting, so having the contrast in most cases aids a design.

Shape language is the first place to start in identifying where to use what stroke. If the shape language consists of only straight strokes, try diversifying the strokes by adding curves to areas that fall out of the body core, as well as taking advantage of gender markers.

The strokes should be long and confident. Even a greater level of detail in the linework is desired like the last iteration in Figure 3.8, the overall stroke flow should still feel like the long strokes.

### 3.2.2 Head and Face

The head and face area has its own set of guidelines due to the expressiveness of the region. For instance, here in Figure 3.9 we can see the dynamic properties of the triangle shape really play out when applying it to the head shape; the triangle head can be read in four unique ways due to the way the eyes and mouth are placed on the triangle surface.

There are two dimensions to evaluate in the look; 1) the intensity of eye gaze and 2) upper (brain) or lower (jaw) region emphasis. These respectively describe the level of engagement or alertness the character is characterized by, and whether the character is emphasized in the brains or the brawn.



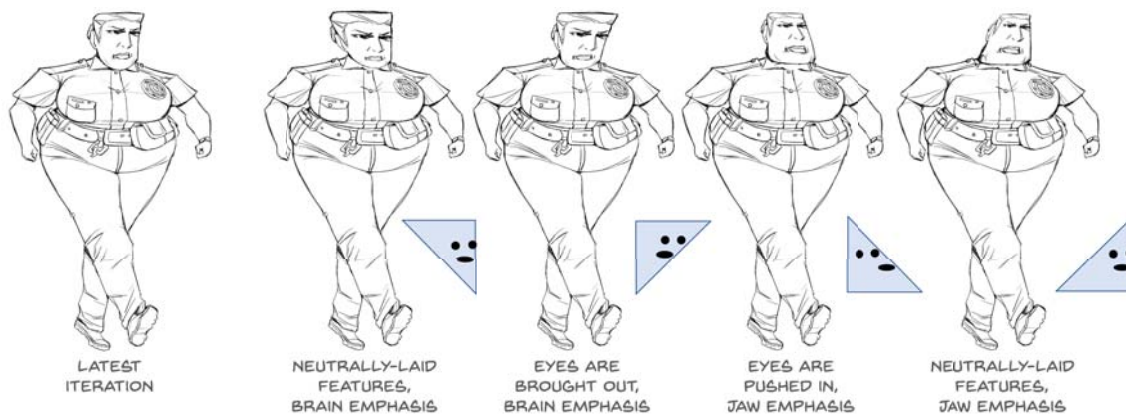


Figure 3.9: Iterations on head structure

The neutrally-laid features with brain emphasis has an intellectual vibe due to the upper emphasis; this does not work with the "tough" aspect which emphasizes more on brawn, and "police" does not hold specific connotations on levels of intelligence. The eyes brought out with brain emphasis has the most fitting look of the iterations with the good emphasis on alertness, but can be pushed in levels of toughness. The eyes pushes in with jaw emphasis feels more stoic than alert, but is tough. The neutrally-laid features with jaw emphasis has the best tough and alert lean, but is introducing a downward lean from the back of the head that gives an droopy impression.

Overall, the current shape seems to have the best combination. This is due to the fact that it was actually a region that was specifically evaluated within the general shape language. Still, it is always good to go back and make sure that it is the most optimal triangular head shape to use, and know why the other levels of distortions do not work as well.

The amount of expression read in the face alone is the equivalent to the amount read in the overall body. That is why the art of caricaturing is often times exclusively focused on the face; the most personality from a person can be seen in the face. Evaluating propor-



tional biases and their physical limitations of the eye region (See Figure 3.10), the mouth (See Figure 3.11), and the nose length is addressed first (See Figure 3.11), and then I evaluate for the proper facial expression (See Figure 3.12). I will generally not go over the sizes of facial features because they do not have as significant connotations as proportions, and when they do, it can often tread into unwanted stereotyping of certain facial features.



Figure 3.10: Iterations on proportions around the eyes

The first dimension for evaluating the eyes is their width distance away from each other. The limitations to the widest the eyes can get from each other is that they cannot go past the edges of the front part of the skull. The wideness tends to be associated with baby-like proportions, which makes characters often seem cuter. The limitations the the narrowest the eyes can be with each other is that they cannot go past the sides of the nose; or at most extreme, the nostrils. The narrowness makes the brows come closer together, which can often give the impression of sternness. For the tough police woman, emphasizing sternness and more adult-like features is desired. Therefore, narrowing the

eye width is the ideal choice for this dimensional change.

The next dimension for evaluating the eyes is the height they and the brows sit on the face. The limitations the lowest the eye region can go on the face is to the nose creases. This is again more similar to baby proportions, and therefore inherently adds a cuteness factor. The limitations the highest the eye region can go on the face is up to the hairline. Especially with a strong widow's peak, this can make a character look angrier. Smaller foreheads also inherently have a more masculine, and therefore older appeal as well. Again, the tough police woman is supposed to be darker and more adult-like, so raising the eyes would make sense.

The last dimension for evaluating the eyes is its distance from the brows. The limitations of the lowest the brows can go is the top of the eye. The lowered brows adds a intensity to the gaze. The limitations of the highest the brows can go it up to the hairline. Usually this would make the character appear more approachable and soft. The current iteration does have the brows touching the hairline, but because it is fairly close to the eyes as well, the usual connotation might not be quite evident. Both iterations work, but the lowered brow ultimately works better because it has an even more intense glare.

After figuring out the proportions around the eye region, the next step to address in the proportions around the mouth. The first dimension for evaluating the mouth is the height it sit on the face. The limitations to the lowest the mouth can go is the top of the chin. This deemphasizes the jaw and makes the character feel older, but in the more feeble way. The limitations to the highest the mouth can go is to the bottom of the nose. This emphasizes the jaw, making the character feel stronger. The tough police woman definitely needs a strong vibe, so the raised mouth is the desired choice.

The last dimension for evaluating the mouth is the width. The limitations to the widest the mouth can go is that they cannot go past the edges of the front part of the skull. This makes the character look like a blabbermouth or a loudmouth, which gives off an immature

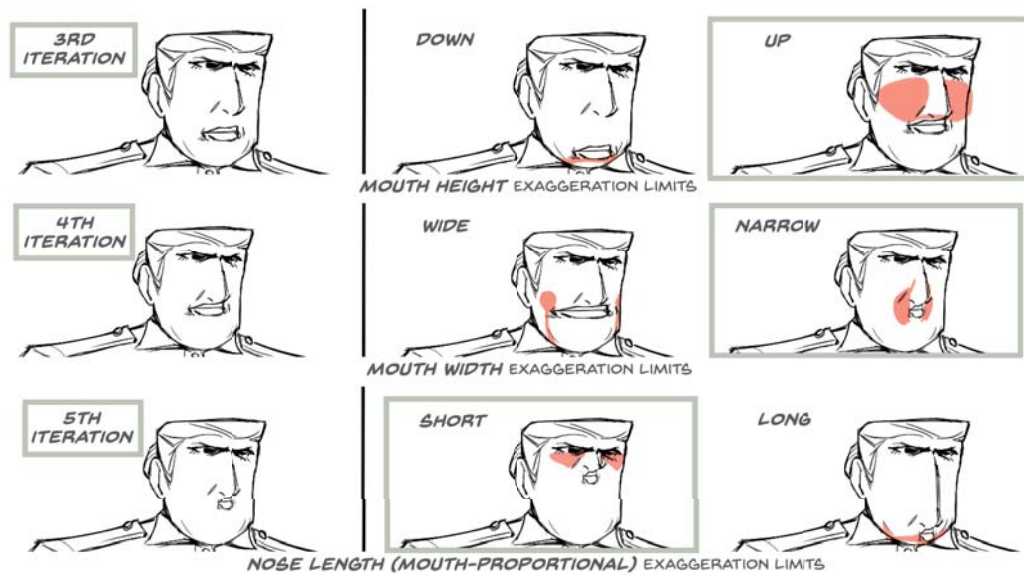


Figure 3.11: Iterations on proportions around the mouth

vibe. The limitation to the narrowest the mouth can go is that it cannot go past the sides of the nose; or at most extreme, the nostrils. This makes the character look stoic and quieter, and even a bit cute. Dependent of the interpretation of a "tough police woman", there can be an argument for either side. In my view, "police" implies a level of professionalism that the more narrow mouth supports. Though the description certainly does not imply "cute", the narrower mouth does additionally gives more space to the jaw which contributes to the "tough" aspect. Therefore, I would personally go with the narrow mouth for this tough police woman.

The final dimension to be discussed is the length of the nose (with the mouth staying the same proportionally relative to the nose). The limitations to the shortest the nose length can go is the nose tip region cannot go past the bottom of the eyes. This can create a cuter look because of the baby-like proportions, but in this situation it also emphasizes the jaw, which can contribute to a strong look. The limitations to the longest the nose length can go is the top of the chin. This makes the character look older, but also smaller since the jaw

is deemphasized and the fact that it resembles the idea of looking in a downward angle at the character. While "cute" might not be a characteristic that should be emphasized for the design, the shorter nose still seems to work better because of the strong jaw. Meanwhile, the longer nose does not really fulfill any connotation desired for the character.

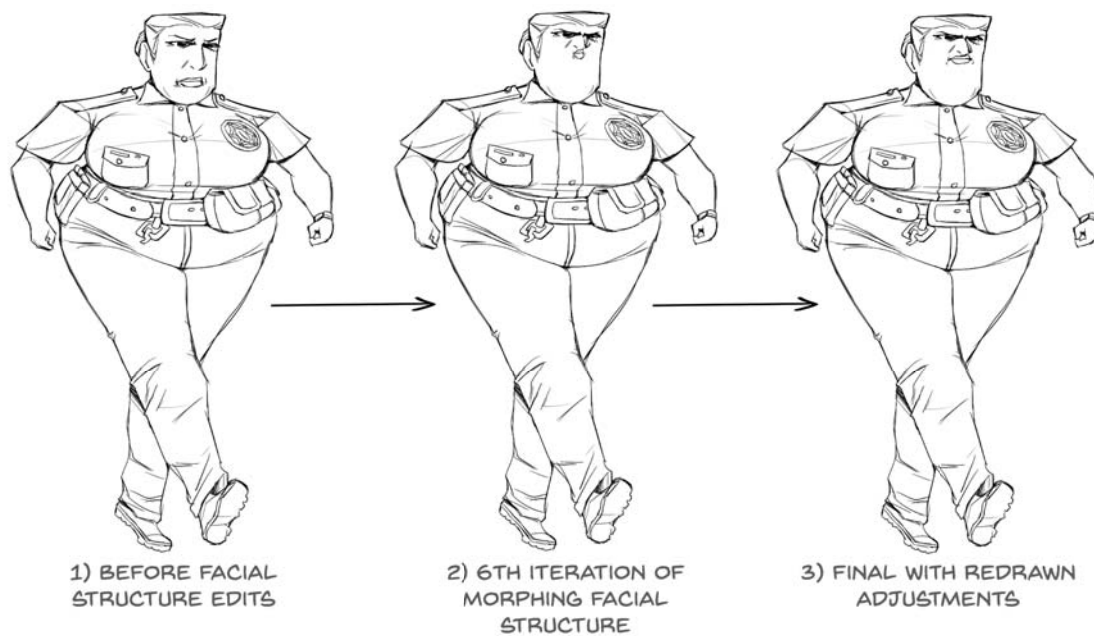


Figure 3.12: Adjusting the final face iteration for final face result

After analyzing through all of the dimensions, it is noticeable that not every section has an extreme bias that perfectly matches the intended connotation. For instance, although I believe I have chosen the most fitting extremes in the sixth iteration as seen in Figure 3.12, there are some remnants of the unwanted "cute" elements to the face, particularly in regards to the nose height and the mouth width. In my adjustments, I lengthened the nose slightly and widened the nose a bit as well to remove the unwanted qualities. Ultimately, the most important thing to note about these dimensions is the overall connotation

of moving a feature from one bias end to the other, and making sure that you do not design towards the incorrect end (but it is not a necessity to have to go extreme for everything either if the character is more subtle and complex).

The last section of the face to address is the facial expression.

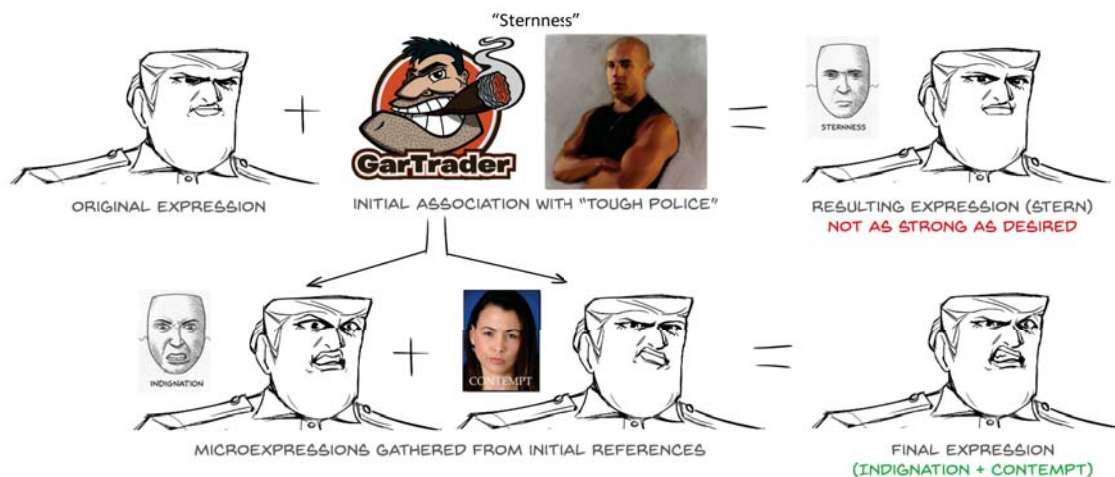


Figure 3.13: Process of figuring out the facial expression  
(adapted from [22])

Figuring the expression is a much more organic process than morphing proportions. Although my initial emotion-word association with "tough" and "police" was "sternness", it actually became the least desirable result. To me, it looks too calm and undirected, whereas the idea of toughness seems to imply "tough" behavior being directed towards something, especially with the fact that I have also associated the idea of "alertness" with the character. My favorite reference that I found ended up being the snarl from the "Car Trader" image shown in Figure 3.13, and it turns out that a combination of indignation and contempt did the trick. This is an example of how it is important to reference other artistic depictions as well rather than purely relying on theory and intuition.

### 3.2.3 Staging

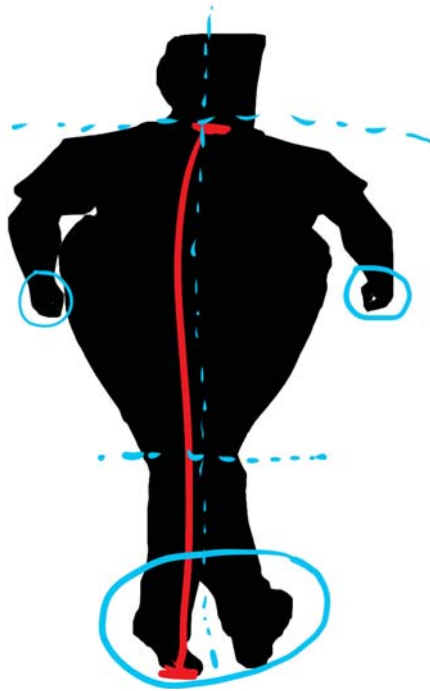


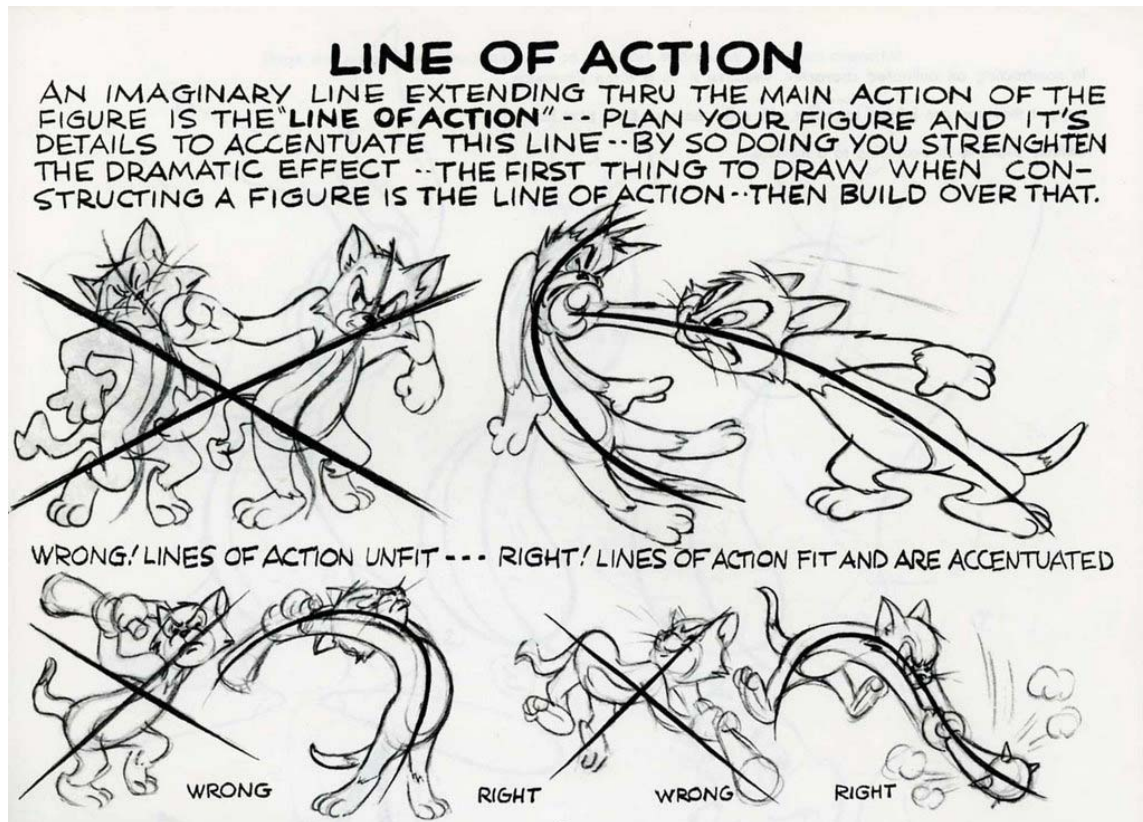
Figure 3.14: Problems with unedited staging in silhouette form

The last thing to address in creating a unique personality in the character is the staging. Johnston and Thomas emphasize that it is crucial to have the staging of the action "so that it is understood, [and] a personality is recognizable" [5]. They define good staging itself as "the presentation of any idea so that it is completely and unmistakably clear" [5].

To start figuring out what might be the best way to stage the character, we must first find out what is a problem with the current staging. It is helpful to look at the silhouette for this task to see if clarity is presented in its most fundamental form. In the current state of our design, the line of action is extremely light and subtle, not very fitting for "tough" and "police". Her planted foot is also weakly placed, which is opposite to the "tough police"



image, and even the square shape language that we intended her legs to have. Other factors that are bringing down the silhouette are the overall non-directional, boring symmetry in the policewoman's core shape, as well as her weakly posed hands.



(a) Reprinted from [1]

Figure 3.15: Blair's demonstration of line of action

Blair describes the line of action as "an imaginary line extending [through] the main action of the body" [1]. What a successful line of action creates is essentially an appealing flow throughout the forms of the body. This is a fundamental concept to good staging as seen in Figure 3.15, but it might be too abstract and simplistic of a description for a complicated process. I have broken down the process into four mini sections

as a supplementary explanation to the concept of line of action that starts off with 1) the weight-carrying line (first part of the line of action, See Figure 3.16), 2) the simple and complex flow of the forms around the line of action (See Figure 3.17), 3) dimensionality in form (See Figure 3.19), and 4) head orientation (second part of the line of action, See Figure 3.20).

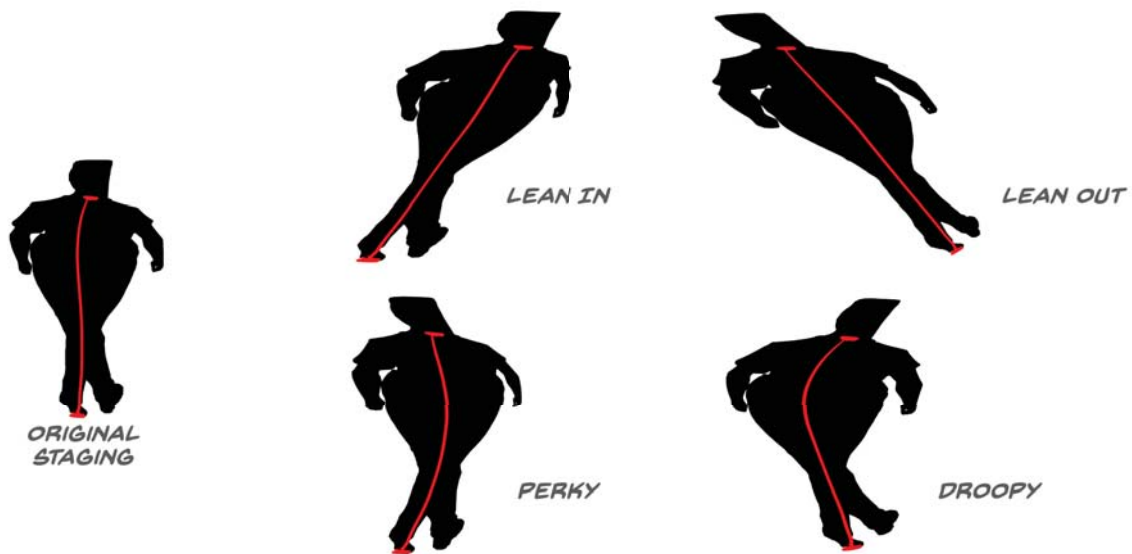


Figure 3.16: Four types of the weight-carrying line

The weight-carrying line demonstrated in Figure 3.16 refers to the line that goes from the leg carrying the most weight (where the foot is planted) and through the spine line. The logic of using this sort of guideline goes back to the conceptualization of the contrapposto stance, where artists shifted away from an unrealistic, stiff portrayal of posture to a more realistic stance supported by understanding weight. There are four types of these lines that can be created 1) lean-in line, where the line is straight and the body is leaning towards the direction it faces 2) lean-out line, where the line is straight and the body is leaning away



from the direction it faces 3) perky line, where the line is curved with the chest puffed out, and finally 4) droopy line, where the line is curved with the back turning downward.

The lean-in line appears aggressive and indicate a purposeful direction. This is a potentially good lean for a tough and engaged character like the tough police woman. Meanwhile the lean-out line carries the feeling of jumping back, which implies surprise or disgust. These connotations are not relevant to the tough police woman. The perky line gives a confident, positive feeling. This could work for the tough police woman, but does not feel as purposeful as a tough character would. The droopy line can indicate cautiousness, curiosity, or sadness. These connotation are not relevant to the tough police woman. The pose I went along with was the lean-in line due to the fact that the aggressive appeal is very fitting for the "tough" aspect.

A big reason purely just going by the line of action is too simplistic of a description is because it does not inform an artist how the forms around the lines should be constructed. Lemay's "Pick A Side" offers a solution to the issue with the explanation that there should be a simple side and a complex side, and have the complex side serve as the "point of interest" [13].

To make this concept more understandable, I divided the silhouette into two halves using the weight-carrying line as the divider as shown in Figure 3.17. I then identified which side had the more complex flow; the unedited pose is fairly even, but there is a slight bias towards the screen right side with the leg that pokes out. Using that logic, I chose the screen right side as the side with the complex flow. In the redrawing of the silhouette to emphasize on the respective flows, I made the adjustment to have the screen right arm stick out in a more aggressive stance, and kept the screen left arm flowing alongside the body. I had the screen right leg stick out more, but I chose not to have it stick out too much to not break the inverted triangle core shape. After adjusting the silhouette, I transferred these proportions to a redraw of the character.

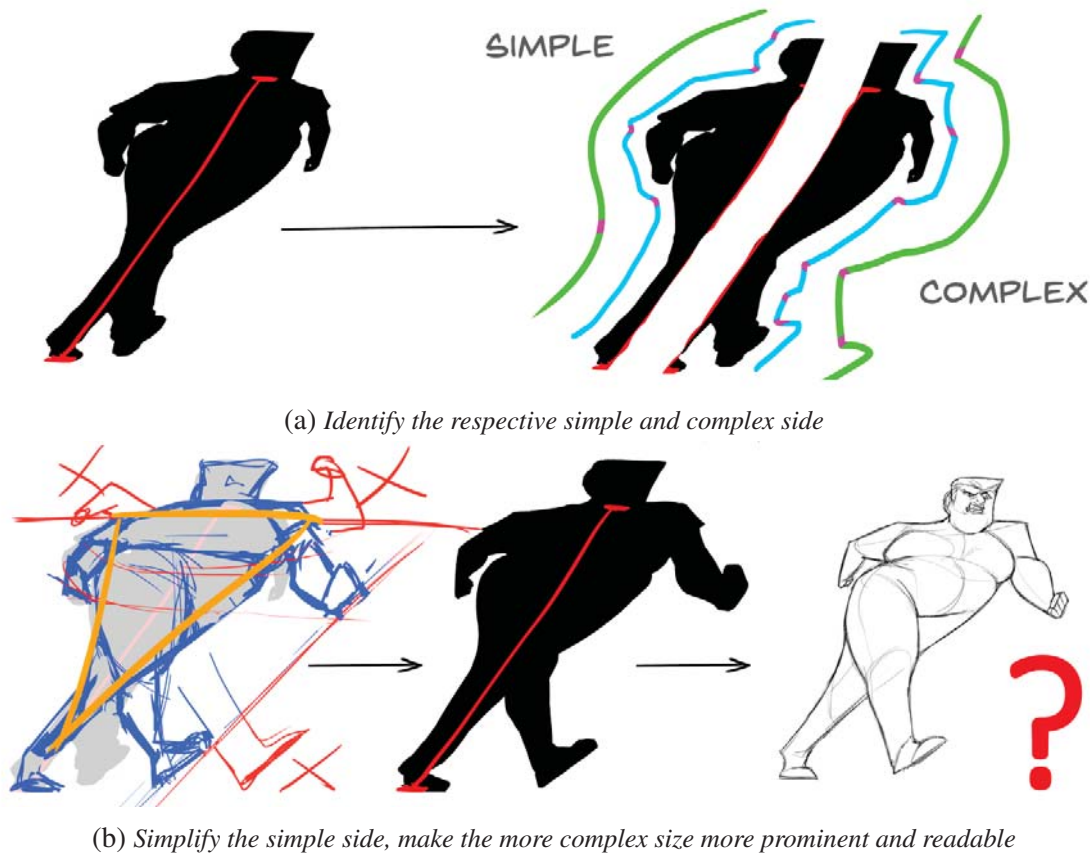


Figure 3.17: Using the weight-carrying line to identify the simple-complex sides

I was about to settle with the results from Figure 3.17, until I remembered the last two crucial concepts. This realization came about when I was given the edit (iteration on the right) shown in Figure 3.18.

During a critique session demonstrated in Figure 3.18, it was brought to my attention that the posture in my iteration after the simple-complex edit had a weak stance, like the character was about to fall over. One of the main points I missed when remaking the posture was dimensionality.

I did not notice that I actually created the wrong weight-carrying line lean due to the fact that I was only thinking about it in terms of the 2D space rather than in 3D space.

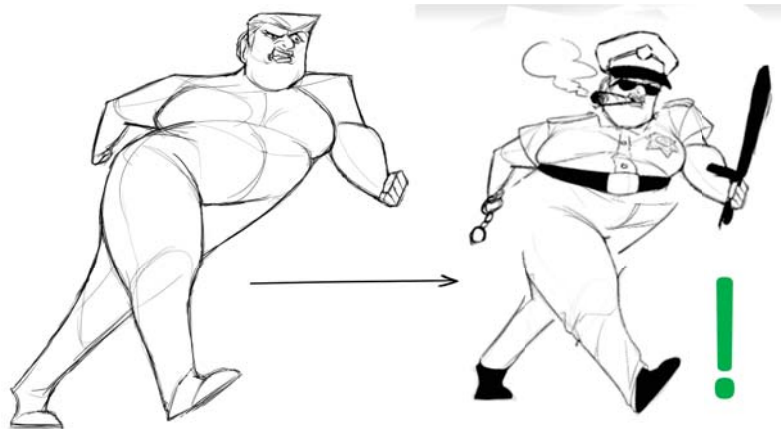


Figure 3.18: Identifying staging error

Additionally, I unconsciously removed some foreshortening elements that were actually more visible in the silhouette mock up than my final edit; this happened because, again, I flattened the dimensions so naturally the dimensionality went away as well.

In Figure 3.19's edit on the right, I adjusted the spine to bring back an aggressive lean, made the feet follow a three dimensional space, and emphasized on the foreshortened elements. This edit makes the posture feel more powerful, particularly with the strong swinging legs. The shoulders are also twisted more dramatically opposed to the hip movements, which creates a more naturalistic feeling in the weight compared to the stiff shoulders of the previous iteration. However, this was not the only missing element.

The head orientation, shown in Figure 3.20, is the last element, and essentially the final end of the line of action. The full line of action demonstrated by Blair in Figure 3.15 is equivalent to what I describe as the weight-carrying line and the head orientation combined. The reason I did not address the two elements together is that I felt it was important to understand that while the spine and leg can move flexibly, the head merely moves by rotation. This separation also helps in simplifying the categorization of the connotative meanings of all the curves and orientations. And lastly, merely just mentioning the line of

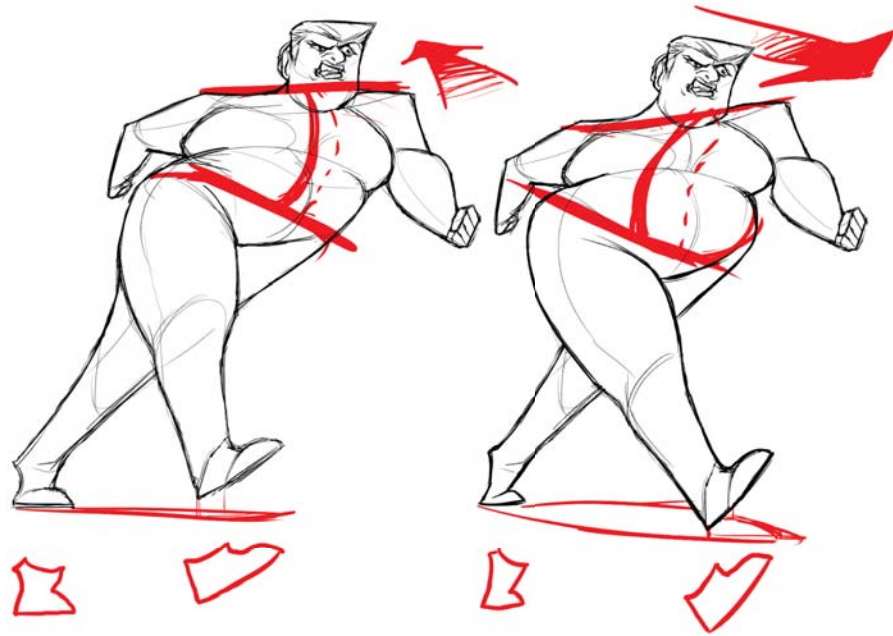


Figure 3.19: Considering dimensionality

action does not address how to deal with creating the form around it, which is crucial to appealing staging.

There are three types of orientations of the head; 1) downward lean, 2) straight, and 3) upward lean. The connotations of the orientations are more numerous than those of the weight-carrying lines because of the separate meanings each different eye gaze conveys in every head orientation. The four gazes that each head orientation consists of are 1) gaze ahead, 2) gaze behind, 3) gaze down, and 4) gaze up. For simplicity's sake, I only evaluate the tough police woman's design in terms of the default gaze she has, since it has been consistently decided for her to be gazing towards something (though I still go over the connotative meanings for all the other gazes).

The first lean is the downward lean. When the gaze is ahead, it gives a feeling of focus and engagement. When the gaze is behind, it feels like disgust and judgment. When the gaze is down, the looks feels angry or sad, depending on the brow intensity. If the character

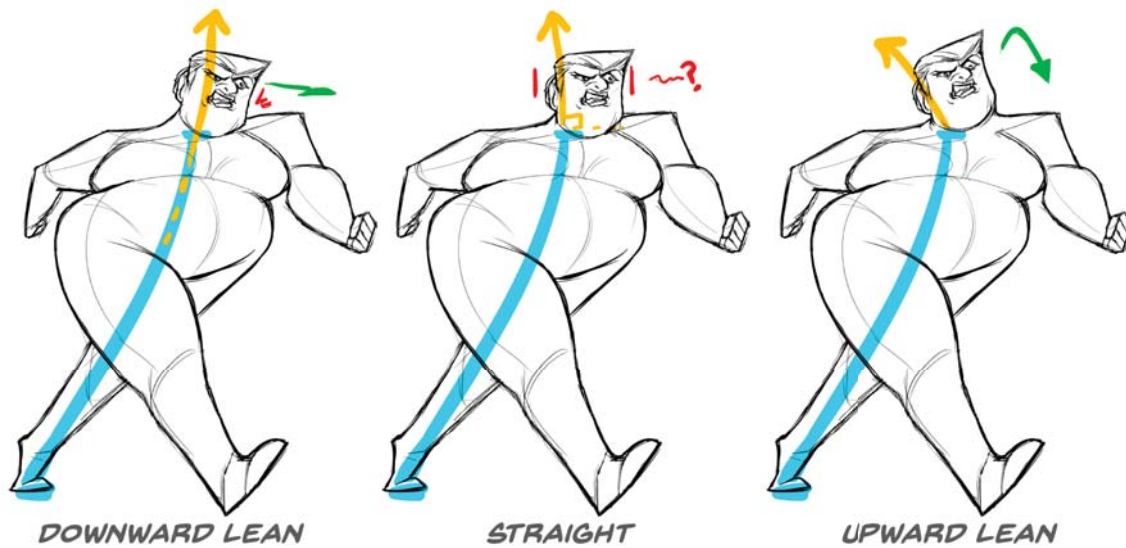


Figure 3.20: Three types of head orientation

is smiling with a downward lean and a downward gaze, which is an unusual combination, they can look timid and shy. When the gaze is up, the character seems like they are lost in thought. The tough police woman has a gaze ahead in Figure 3.20, a focused gaze, which works for what we want. However, there is also an awkward tension created between the shoulder and head lean that weakens the power in the posture, so it is better to look for a different head orientation.

The second lean shown in Figure 3.20 is the straight. When the gaze is ahead, the gaze looks curious. When the gaze is behind, the looks feels cautious. When the gaze is down, the character looks ashamed or contemplative depending on the overall expression. When the gaze is up, it looks like an eye roll which indicates disbelief or exasperation. The tough police woman has a gaze ahead in Figure 3.20, a curious gaze, which is not a strong enough expression for the "tough" characterization.

The last lean is the upward lean. When the gaze is ahead, the look feels alert. When they gaze is behind, the character seems fearful and nervous. When the gaze is down,

the character appears intimidating or prideful. When the gaze is up, it gives a dazed or carefree impression. In this case when the head was oriented, it also cause the gaze to appear downward. The intimidating and prideful look is the most optimal match for the tough police woman aesthetic. Additionally, the pose feels comfortable and confident, making it feel strong.

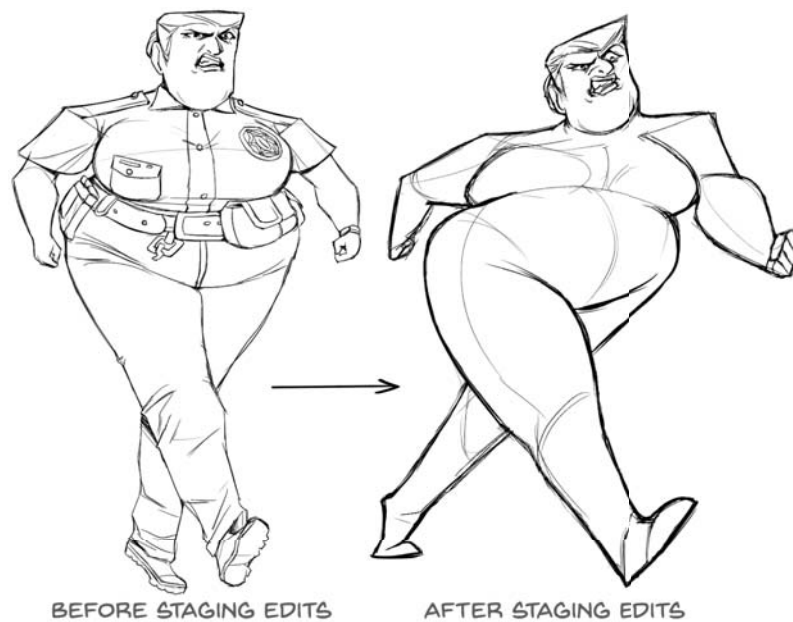


Figure 3.21: Comparison between unedited staging and the edited staging

For staging, I do not deal with the clothes and props unless they influence the silhouette shape significantly. It can be seen in Figure 3.21 that even without the clothes, the personality of the character comes off more effectively than the original staging with the clothes.

### 3.3 Emphasizing Visual Appeal

The final step of character designing is knowing what props to emphasize on, and how exactly to design these props in an appealing manner. When designing the outfit and any extra props associated with the character, it's important that every detail included in is symbolic for an element that supports the intent of the design. Although the methodology initially starts with a real world reference, designing the outfit by the real world reference is not helpful because the realistic details can detract from the overall style and the appeal, and because of the visual plasticity in how human process imagery [11], the real world reference is often less recognizable than a symbolic or simplified representation of the outfit. However, it is useful to use the real world reference as a starting point of understanding what aspects of the outfit can be removed or simplified in order to create an appealing outfit.

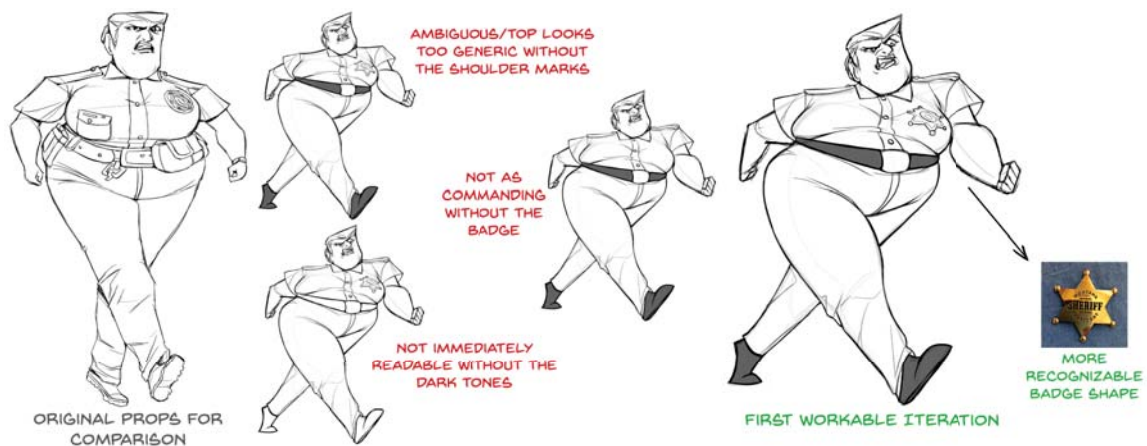


Figure 3.22: Omitting props and simplifying the outfit

On the far right of Figure 3.22 is the final simplified outfit. I took out all of the belt details because a lot of the shapes were fairly hard to read and not necessary for defining



the character as a police officer. I simplified the belt into a black belt with a light buckle because I believe the darkness is the overall most noticeable thing about the police belt, and the buckle is light to make the belt easily identifiable as a belt. Similarly, I felt dark shoes would also be more readable than the detailed shoes. For the top, I felt the button-down shirt with shoulder marks and a police badge were the only necessary elements. I further simplified the police badge since the sheriff's badge is particularly recognized for the star shape rather than the shape of the circular rim.

In the middle of Figure 3.22, I demonstrated why the far right result is the most simplified the outfit can get. The outfit without the shoulder marks makes the outfit read ambiguously; it could merely look like an office worker with a star badge. The outfit without the badge is also fairly ambiguous, and even if it were recognizable as police, it is not as commanding as the outfit with a badge to actually indicate status. Finally, the outfit that does not indicate the dark tones is much harder to immediately read as police as opposed to the toned design.



Figure 3.23: Emphasis with baton



Adding new props can help strengthen a design as long as these props are created with a symbolic purpose. In Figure 3.23, I demonstrate the addition of a police baton to the character. I chose this particular prop because it can represent aggressiveness, which fits the "tough" aspect, and it is a common tool associated with "police". First, I made the choice to place it in the screen right hand because that way the baton is visible in silhouette form. Additionally, that side is also the more complex side, so it does not break the forms to add this element.

Deciding how to pose the baton is crucial to making the addition of the prop meaningful. As Figure 3.23 shows, I came up with three iterations. The first one has the baton going towards the police woman; this posture is awkward because the hand would grip it in an unnatural direction, not to mention that it is also a weapon going inward which could give the unwanted impression of clumsiness. The second demonstration shows the baton coming down from a swing; this one can work, especially with action lines, but it does feel a bit weaker without the action lines so there might be a better alternative. The last example, the iteration that I ultimately went with, is a position in between the two previous iterations; it is the baton coming down right after the anticipation, ready to make a strong swing. I felt the last iteration was the toughest feeling one because the aggressive action is just about to be made, so there is a good sense of tension and unpredictability that the second iteration did not have.

Handcuffs are also a tool that is commonly associated with police, and it also gives a feeling of aggression. Though I have the hand of the simple side carrying the handcuffs, I made sure the flow of the handcuffs went with the existing, simplified flow, rather than making it stick out like with the baton on the complex side. I first experimented with having the handcuffs closed; this does not feel threatening because of the round forms created from the closed shape. I then did an iteration where one of the rings of the handcuffs is opened; this version is a lot more successful because the opened edges are sharp, which

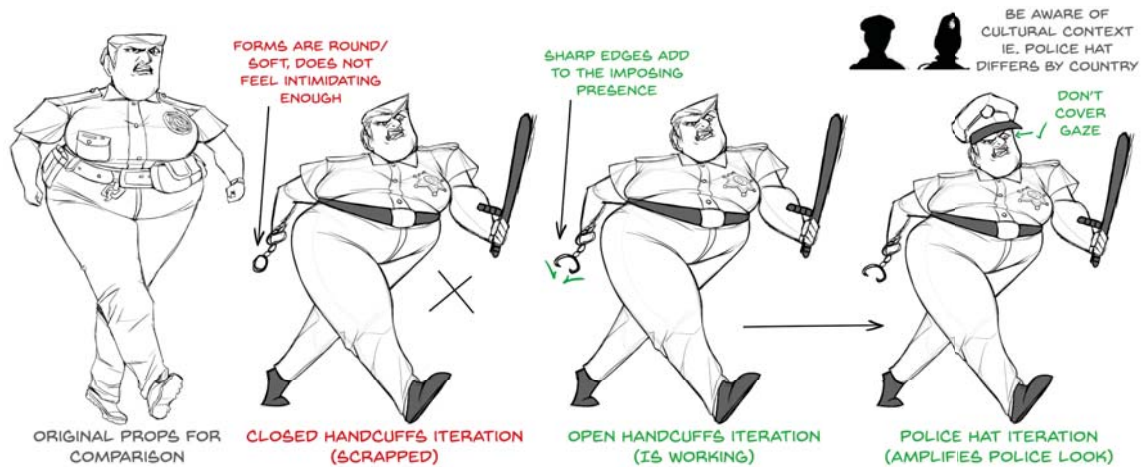


Figure 3.24: Emphasis with handcuff and police hat

create an imposing presence. The opened cuffs also give an impression of active pursuit, which adds to the aggressive, tough feeling.

On the last iteration in Figure 3.24, I added a police hat to amplify the police vibe. When considering with props like the police hat, be wary that they can vary in appearance dependent on the country, so make sure there are other more universally applicable design elements to support the intended character. In this case, the uniform and the baton give a fairly good indication of the police role, so the hat does just serve as an embellishment. In regards to the placement of the hat, I made sure it did not cover the eyes since the intense gaze is fairly important in emphasizing on the "tough" personality.

To add onto tough characteristic, I chose cigars as the next prop to add. It is important to make sure the placement and orientation of the cigar allows the cigar's silhouette to read clearly, while at the same time not take away the head silhouette shape. Figure 3.25 shows a breakdown two different placements of the cigar, with two types of orientation demonstrated for both placements.

The iterations on the left show the cigar placed screen left where the teeth are more bared. Already it is evident that the cigar does not read clearly in the silhouette, which

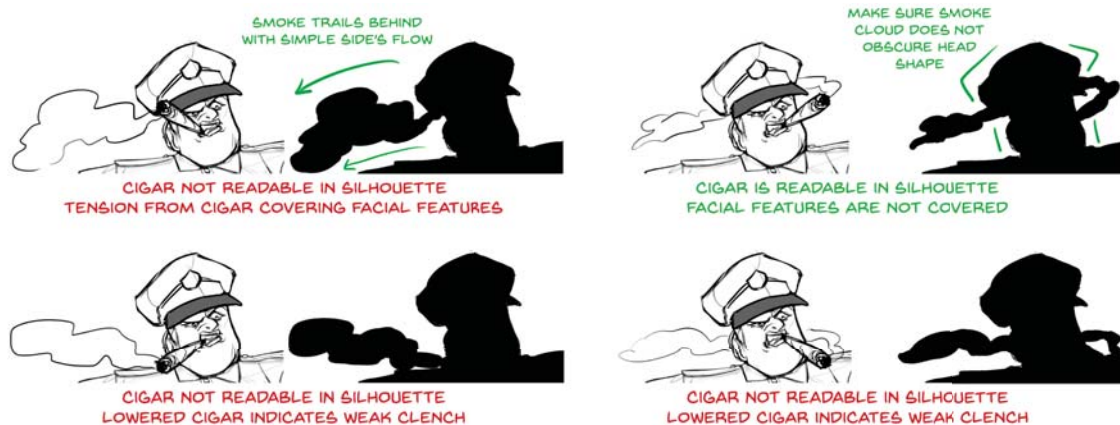


Figure 3.25: Emphasis with cigar

is not desired. On top of that, having the cigar be placed within the face muddles the visibility of facial features. The only benefit to this placement is that the trail of smoke, which should follow the flow of the simple side, is fully visible and can be artistically adjusted flexibly.

The iterations on the right show the cigar placed screen right where the lips are closing in on the clench. The cigar silhouette is only visible in the version where it is held up, which makes it the most promising candidate. That version is also good because having the cigar held up indicates a strong grip, something that should be seen in a tough character. The only real problem with the held up cigar screen right is that the smoke trail volume needs to be compromised for the silhouette of the head to be visible. The smoke trail cannot trail off the other direction because the body is moving in a specific direction (screen left to right) which only allows the smoke trail to move from screen right to left.

Ultimately, the cigar carries the heavier symbolic meaning than the smoke trail, so it is fine to compromise for this instance.

Figure 3.26 shows last prop I added to the character: sunglasses, which I feels encompasses both "tough" and "police" characteristics. I went with the rounded type of

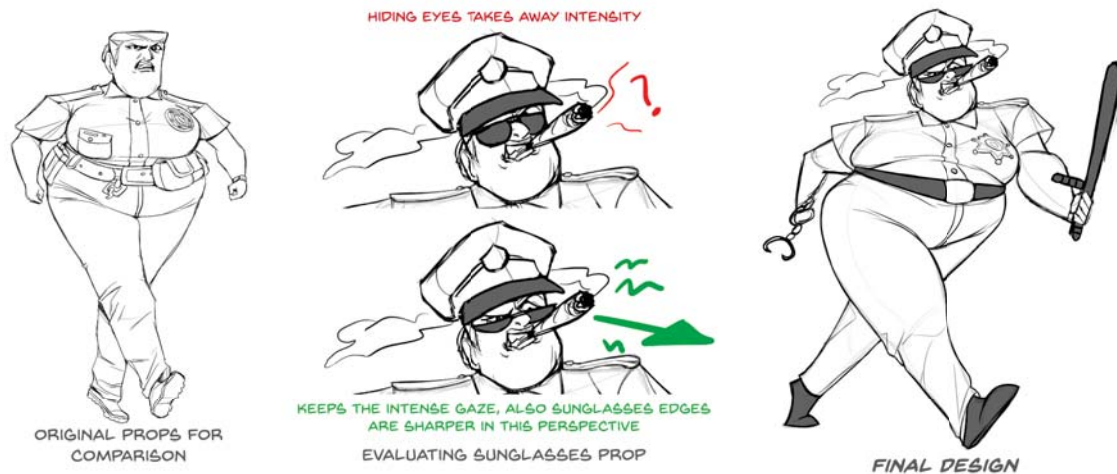


Figure 3.26: Emphasis with sunglasses

sunglasses that are commonly worn by actual police; one problem that arose from this is that the sunglasses completely hid the eyes, which I had previously made a deliberate effort not to obscure since the eyes served an important role in defining the personality. To remedy this problem, I tilted the sunglasses downward so the eyes and gaze would be clearly visible. Another solution I could have opted for was to just have the eyes show through the sunglasses since the lenses of the sunglasses are semi-transparent. I did not go for this for a couple of reasons; the first reason is that in the end, having the features in dark tone would still lessen the visibility of the eyes. The second reason is that the sharper corners of the sunglasses in perspective emphasize much more on toughness than the round corners the sunglasses have in a flattened view. It is worth noting that a benefit of the round sunglasses is that it would be more recognizable, but I felt that the sunglasses in perspective would still be recognizable enough, and the sunglasses in perspective had much more overall benefits.

Lastly, it is not necessary to add a lot extra props to every design; the tough police woman probably could be easily recognizable as such without a couple of the props for

extra emphasis. However for demonstration purposes, this example gives a good idea on how to deal with a varying types of props.

### **3.4 Results**

The following Figure 3.27 demonstrates the breakdown template for the archetypes created using this methodology, drawing analysis points from real world references and analysis like the discussed points throughout the methodology.

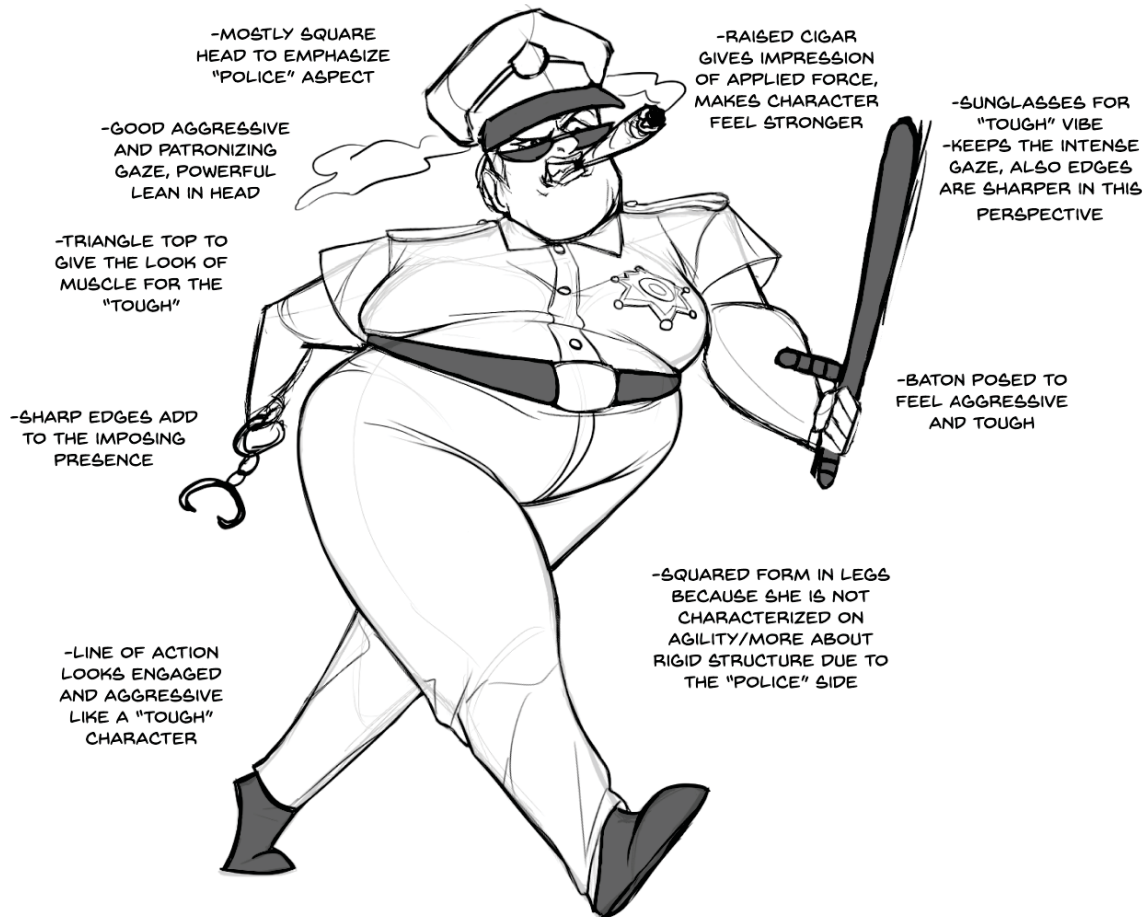


Figure 3.27: Archetype Breakdown Template

## 4. PSYCHOLOGY PERSONALITIES AND THEIR BREAKDOWNS

The previous chapter addressed how to use the methodology using one example, but more samples from the methodology are necessary to cover more specific design issues. The following chapters provides visual examples and breakdowns of a variety of personalities and archetypes that further expand on the design concepts laid out in the methodology.

The first step to addressing common archetypes is first knowing how to describe their mental and motivational personality. In this section, I purely cover how to describe personalities alone.

### 4.1 Dark Personalities

This category addresses what I believe to be the missing piece in Preston Blair's animation archetypal categories: the villains archetype. Of course just looking purely at examples of animated villains, it is evident that there is more than one defined villain archetype. Using figures with strong ideologies, I describe different types of villains based on the psychology's Dark Tetrad personalities [15].

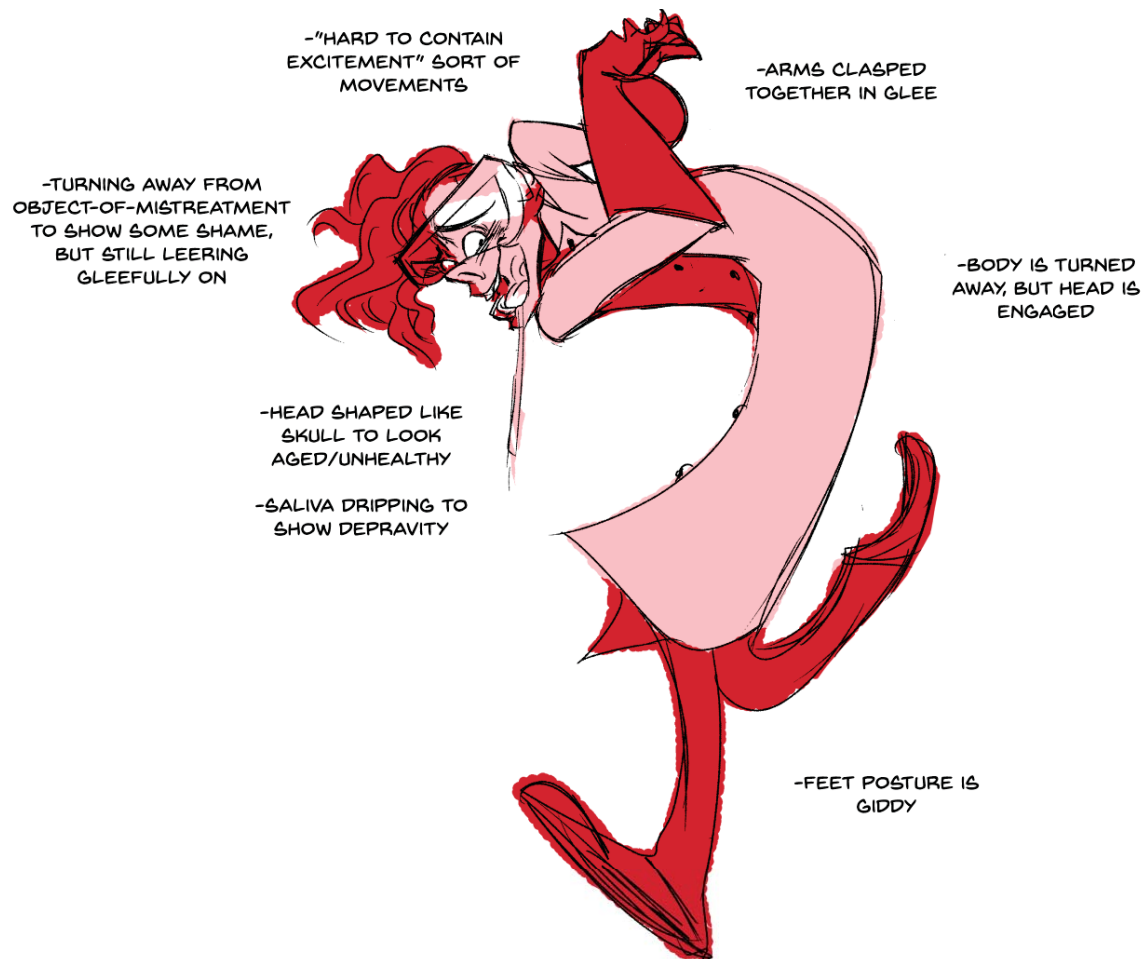


Figure 4.1: Sadist Scientist Breakdown





Figure 4.2: Psycho Priest Breakdown



Figure 4.3: Machiavellian Magician Breakdown

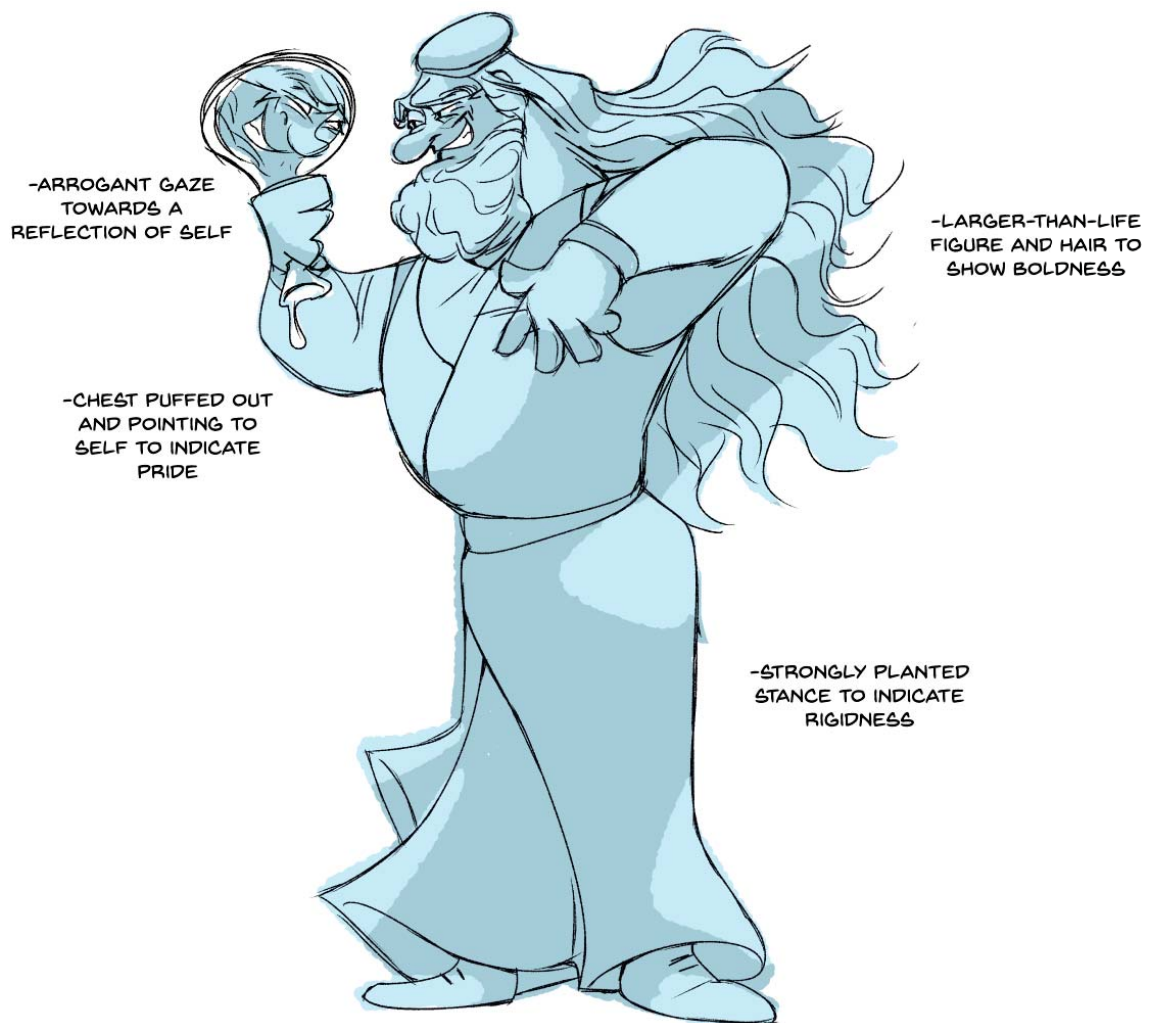


Figure 4.4: Narcissist Alchemist Breakdown

## **4.2 Extrovert-Introvert Personalities**

Evaluating extroverted and introverted personalities involves a more methodically analyzable process than all other archetypes. Extroverts are clearly characterized by more open and dramatic body motion and posture while introverts are clearly characterized by more subtle, shy, and closed-in postures. The dimensions within the extrovert and introvert categories are mainly characterized through their eye-gaze to indicate the specific mentality of the personality dimensions. Using musicians in a jazz band, I explain the different dimensions of extroverted and introverted personalities [17].



Figure 4.5: Judge-by-Thinking Jazzy Introvert Reevaluation + Final Breakdown



Figure 4.6: Judge-by-Thinking Jazzy Extrovert Reevaluation + Final Breakdown



Figure 4.7: Judge-by-Feeling Jazzy Introvert Breakdown





Figure 4.8: Judge-by-Feeling Jazzy Extrovert Reevaluation + Final Breakdown





Figure 4.9: Perceive-by-Observation Jazzy Introvert Breakdown

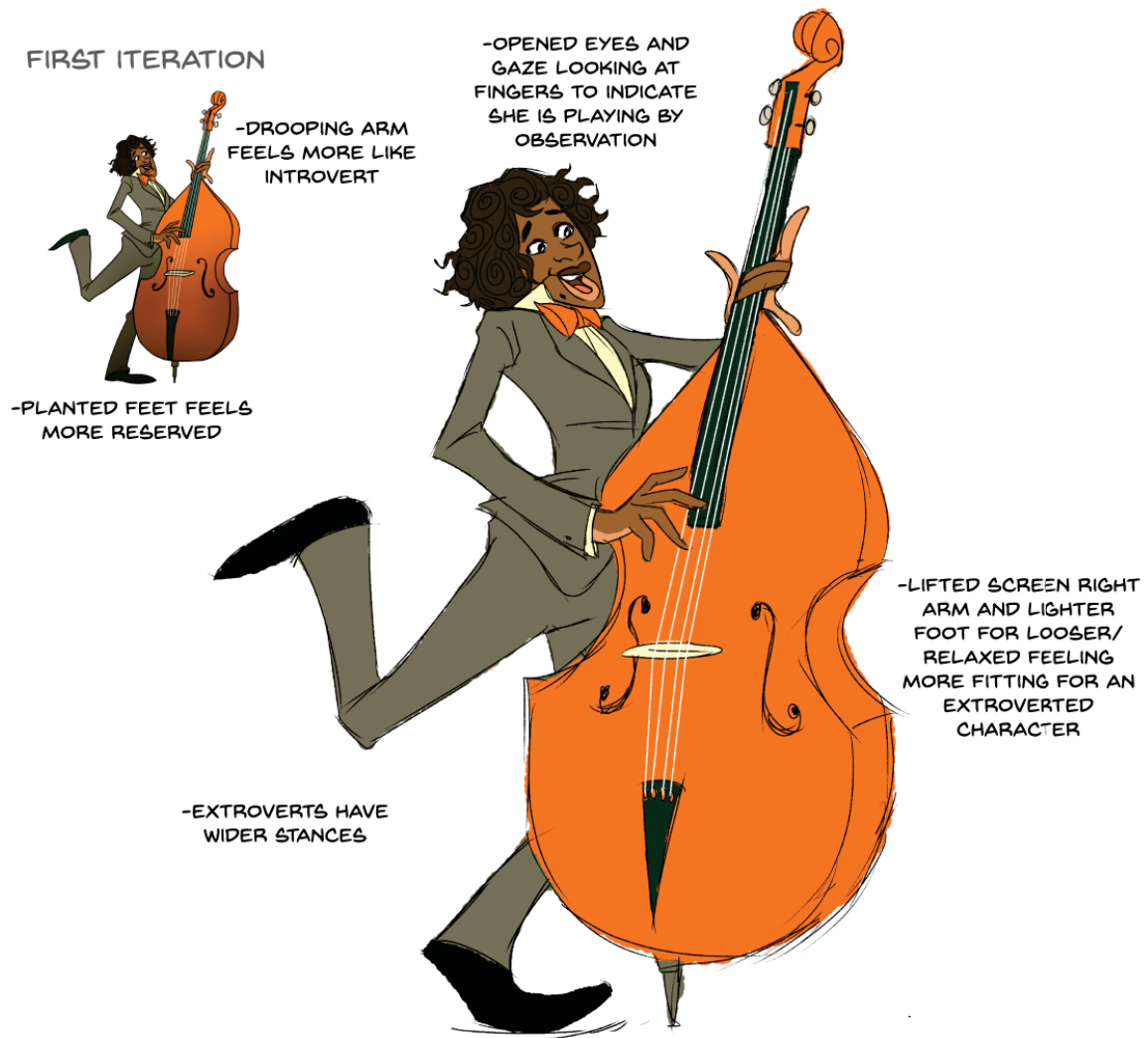


Figure 4.10: Perceive-by-Observation Jazzy Extrovert Reevaluation + Final Breakdown

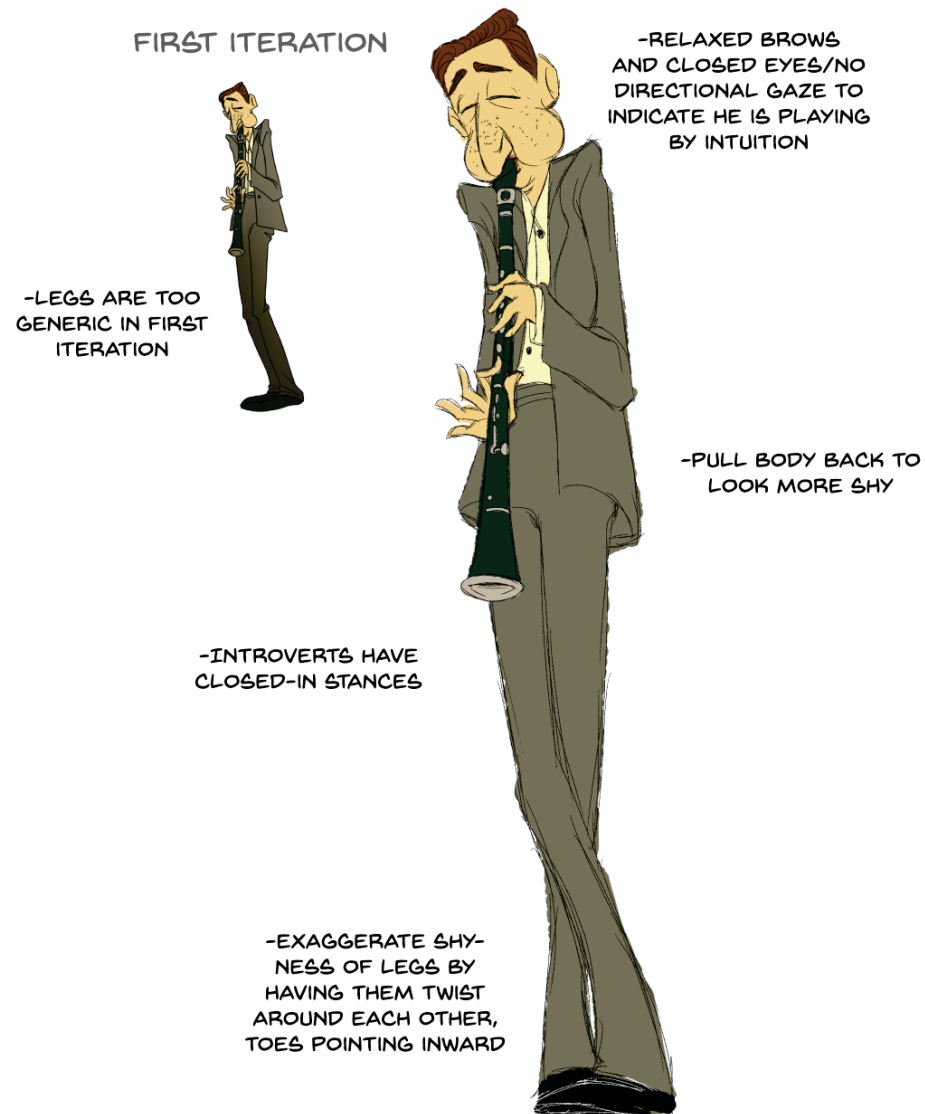


Figure 4.11: Perceive-by-Intuition Jazzy Introvert Reevaluation + Final Breakdown

### **4.3 Big Five Personalities**

For designing more specifically about the motivation of a character rather than just their mentality, it is good to reference the well-known Big Five Personalities [16]. Extroversion, though it is one personality of the five, is not addressed in this section since it has already been covered in detail in the previous section. The two dimensions of one personality are given the same theme for the clear comparison of the personality dimensions, though each personality has a different theme from other personalities to showcase flexibility in describing through the Big Five personalities.

#### **4.4 Results**

Even without going into character roles, it is evident that strong characters can be formed purely through personality. With this solid base, a more rich and fleshed-out characterization can be formed when moving on to designing for literary archetypes.

# FIRST ITERATION



-POSTURE NOT  
DYNAMIC ENOUGH  
FOR AN  
EXTROVERT



-EXTROVERTS HAVE  
WIDER STANCES

-NON-DIRECTIONAL  
GAZE TO INDICATE SHE  
IS PLAYING BY  
INTUITION

-MORE DYNAMIC  
POSTURE GIVES A  
MORE EXTROVERTED  
FEELING; SEE  
COMPARED TO FIRST  
ITERATION

Figure 4.12: Perceive-by-Intuition Jazzy Extrovert Reevaluation + Final Breakdown



Figure 4.13: More Agreeable Archer Breakdown

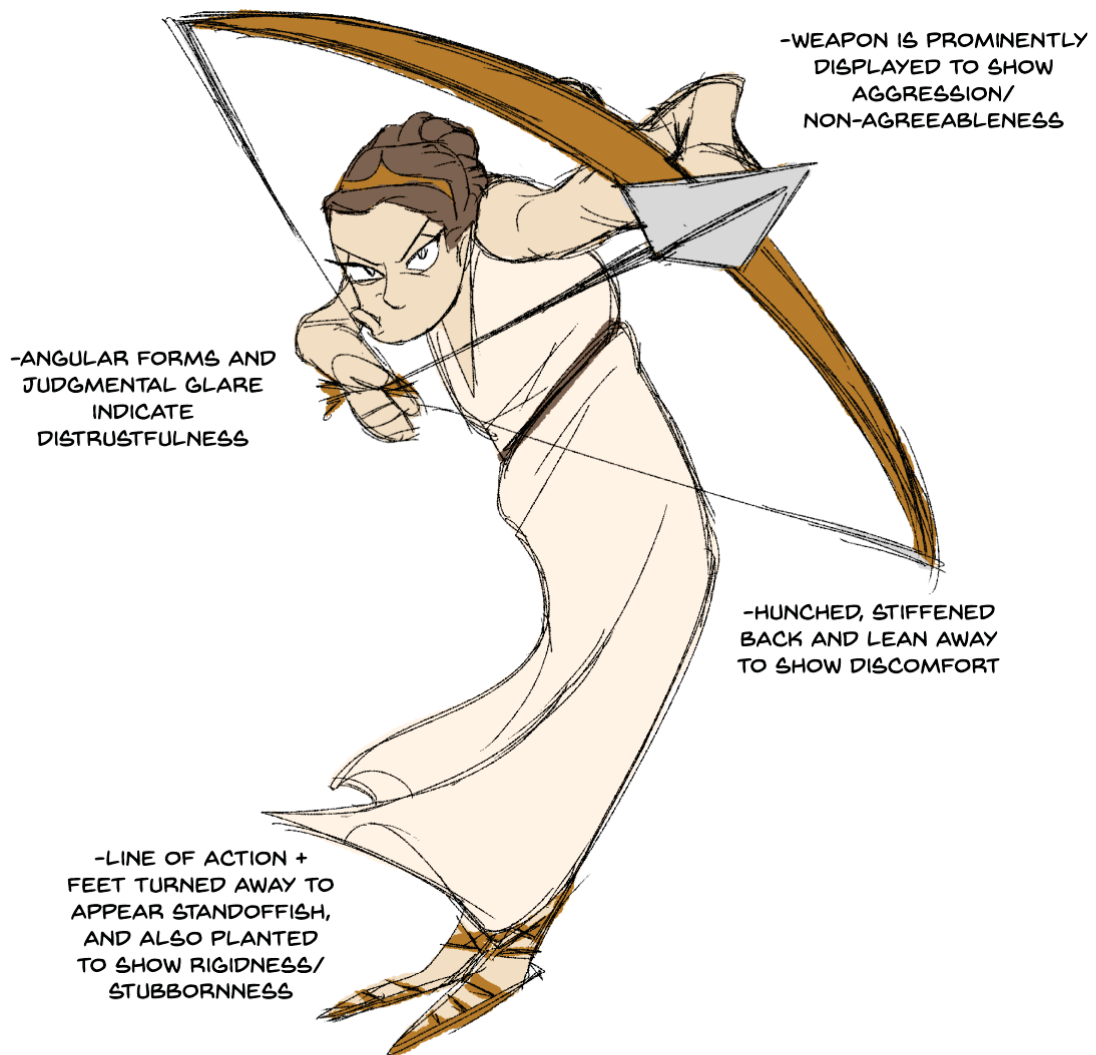


Figure 4.14: Less Agreeable Archer Breakdown



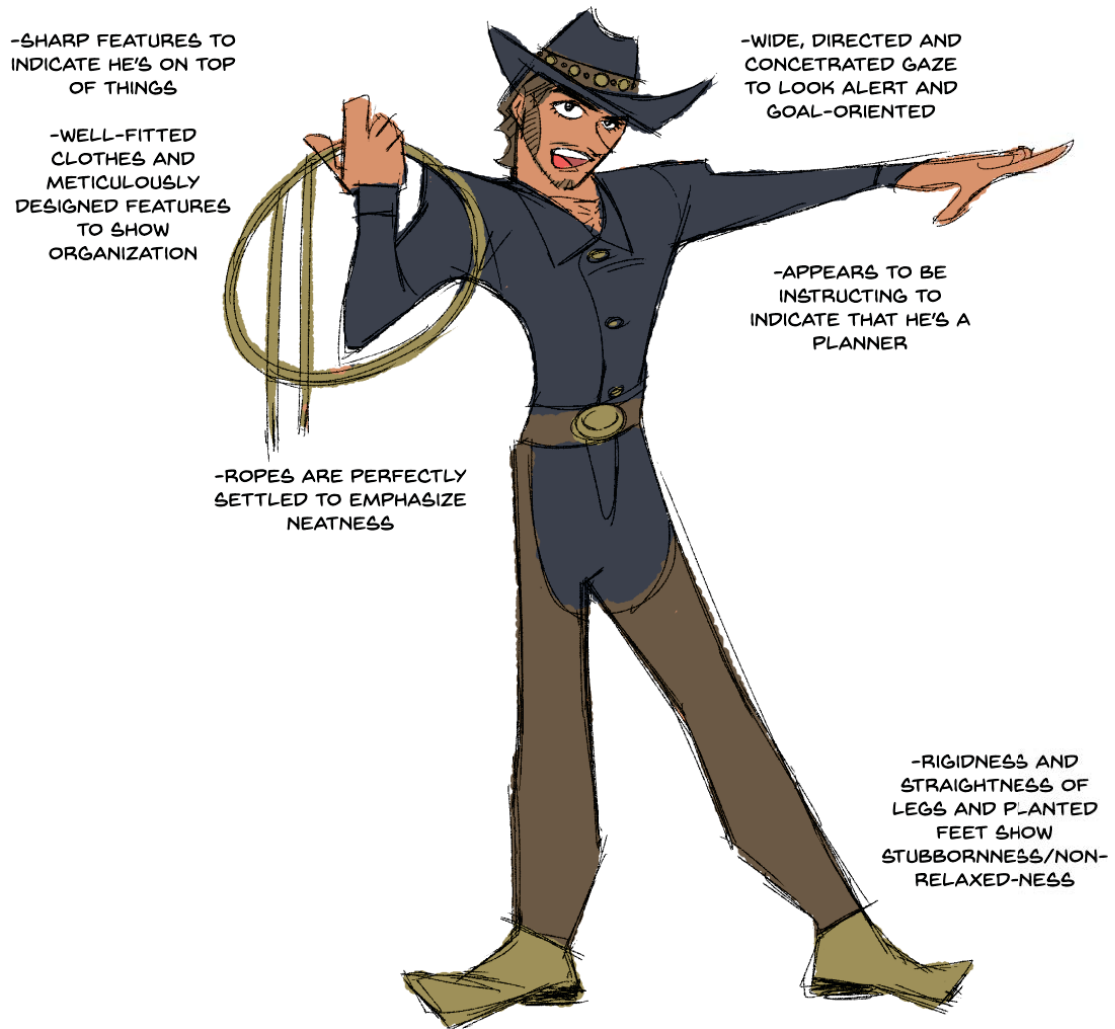


Figure 4.15: More Conscientious Cowboy Breakdown



Figure 4.16: Less Conscientious Cowgirl Breakdown

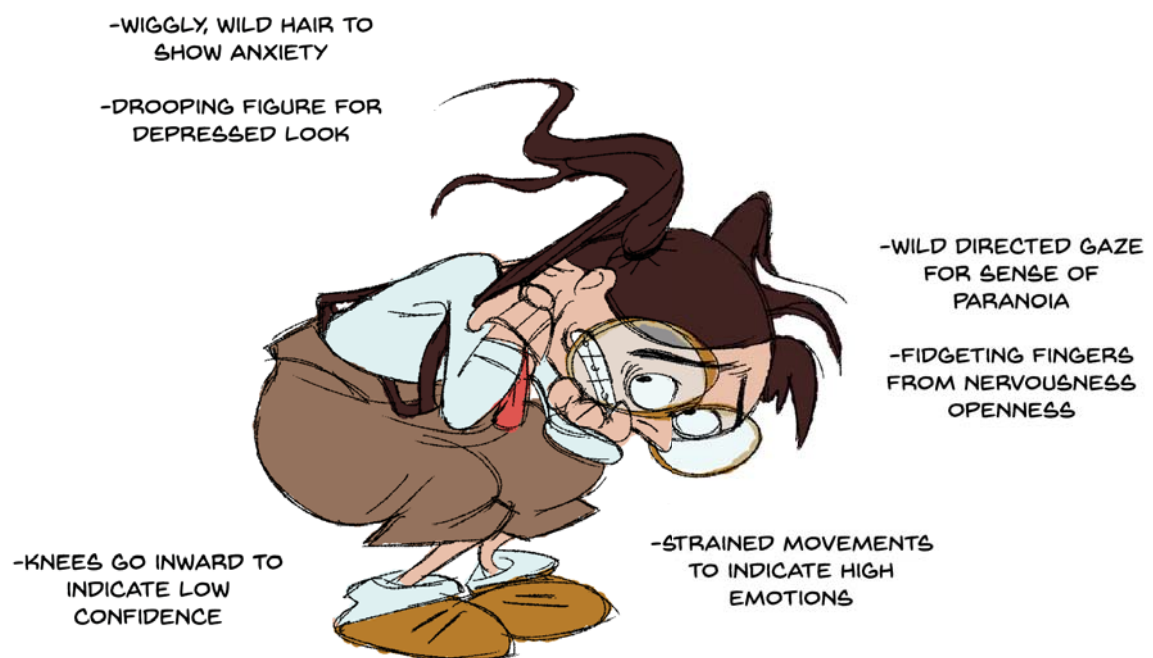


Figure 4.17: More Neurotic Nerd Breakdown

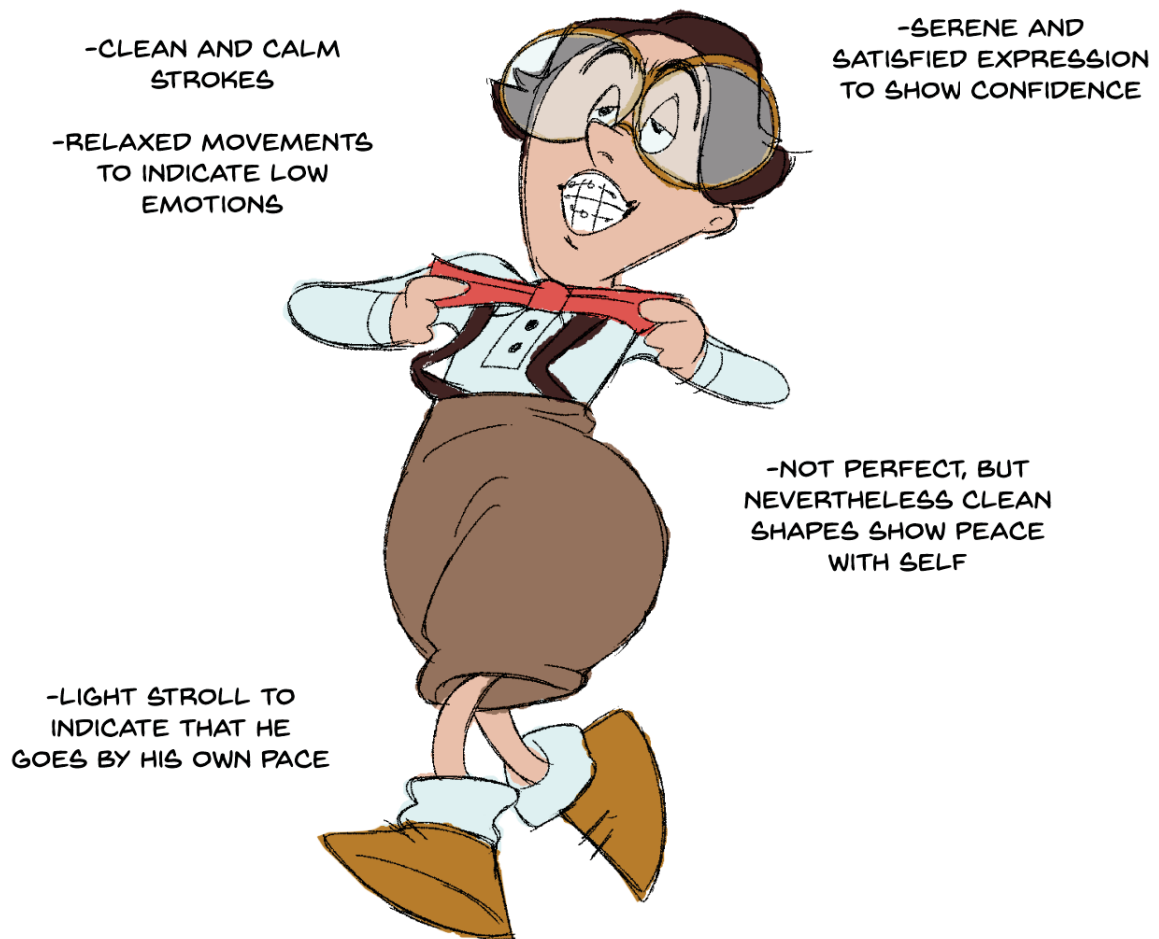


Figure 4.18: Less Neurotic Nerd Breakdown



Figure 4.19: More Open Office Worker Breakdown

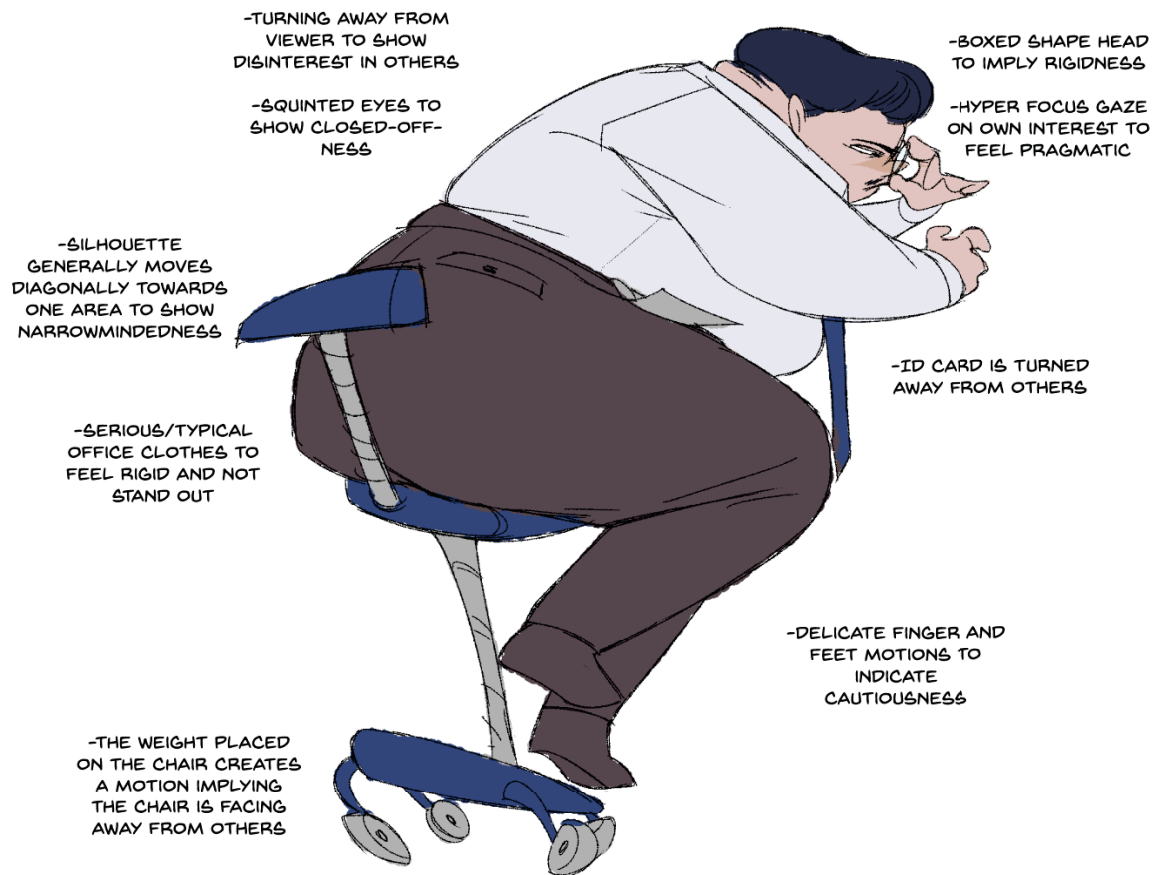


Figure 4.20: Less Open Office Worker Breakdown

## 5. LITERARY ARCHETYPES AND THEIR BREAKDOWNS

In addition to having a strong personality, a fully-fleshed character should also have a well-defined role. This is how reoccurring and iconic archetypes came to be formed in classic literature [19, 18], and continue to be found in modern storytelling. The specific design issues I address are 1) making culturally-specific designs widely readable, 2) designing action and movement in a deliberate manner, and 3) describing weight properly for characters that do not stand on the ground.

### 5.1 Cultural-Specificity with Clarity

Stories can take place in diverse settings, even environments that can be completely foreign to most, but using well-known archetypes ground characters from these stories to familiar territories for wide audiences. Balancing the interesting elements of culturally-specific design while aiming to make the character archetype still more or less universally understood is the ideal result for creating a unique character. I use a medieval Chinese backdrop as a culturally-specific element to ten literary archetypes to explain how to maintain the balance.

-HALF-LIDDED EYES  
TO APPEAR OF HIGHER  
STATUS

-SMILE IS POLITE AND  
POISED FOR PRINCELY  
FEELING

-HAND IS CAREFUL AND  
POISED

-SPINE HAS A CURVED  
BACK LEAN TO  
INDICATE CONFIDENCE

-FEET IS PLANTED  
FOR IMPRESSION OF  
STRENGTH IN STATUS/  
IDENTITY



Figure 5.1: Medieval Chinese Prince Breakdown



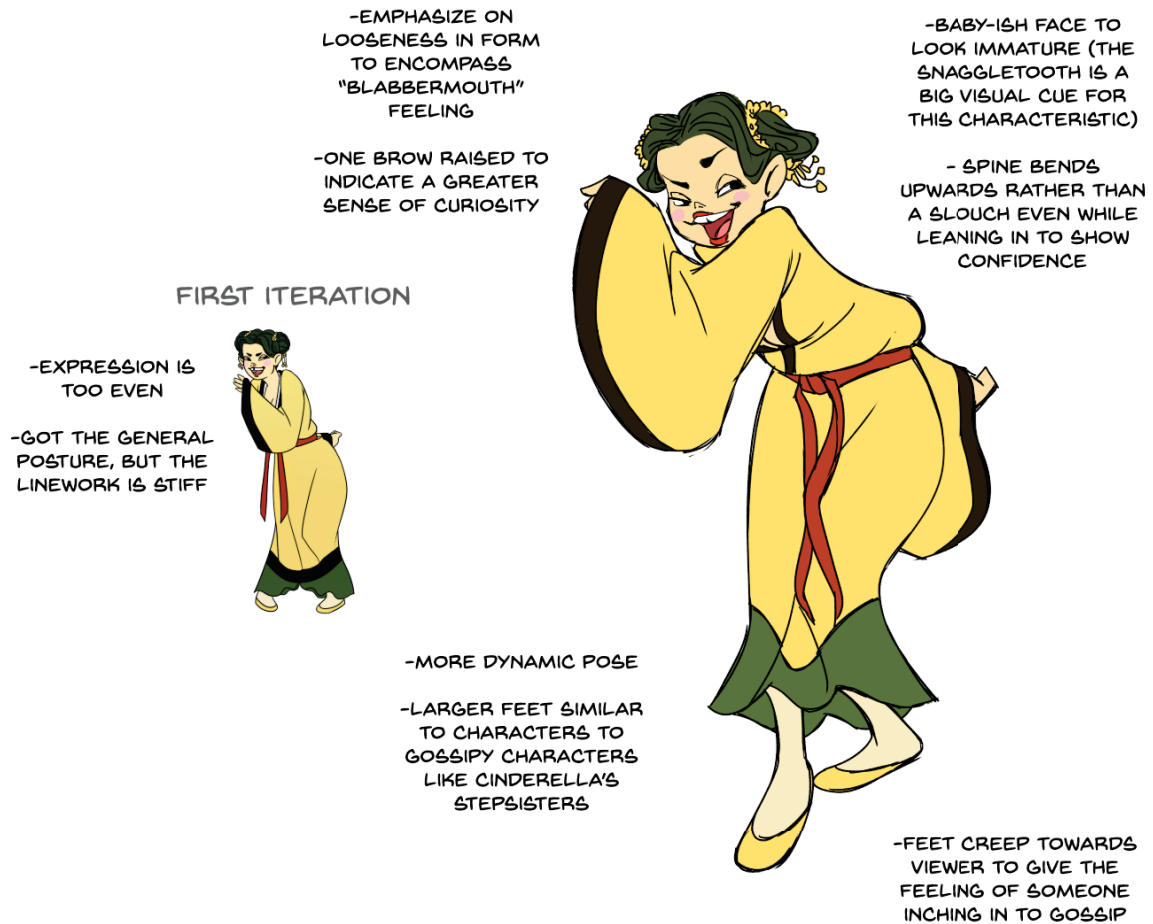


Figure 5.2: Medieval Chinese Blabbermouth/Gossiper Reevaluation + Final Breakdown



Figure 5.3: Medieval Chinese Playboy/Rogue Breakdown



Figure 5.4: Medieval Chinese Adventurer/Daredevil/Explorer Reevaluation + Final Break-down



Figure 5.5: Medieval Chinese Conqueror/Warrior Reevaluation + Final Breakdown

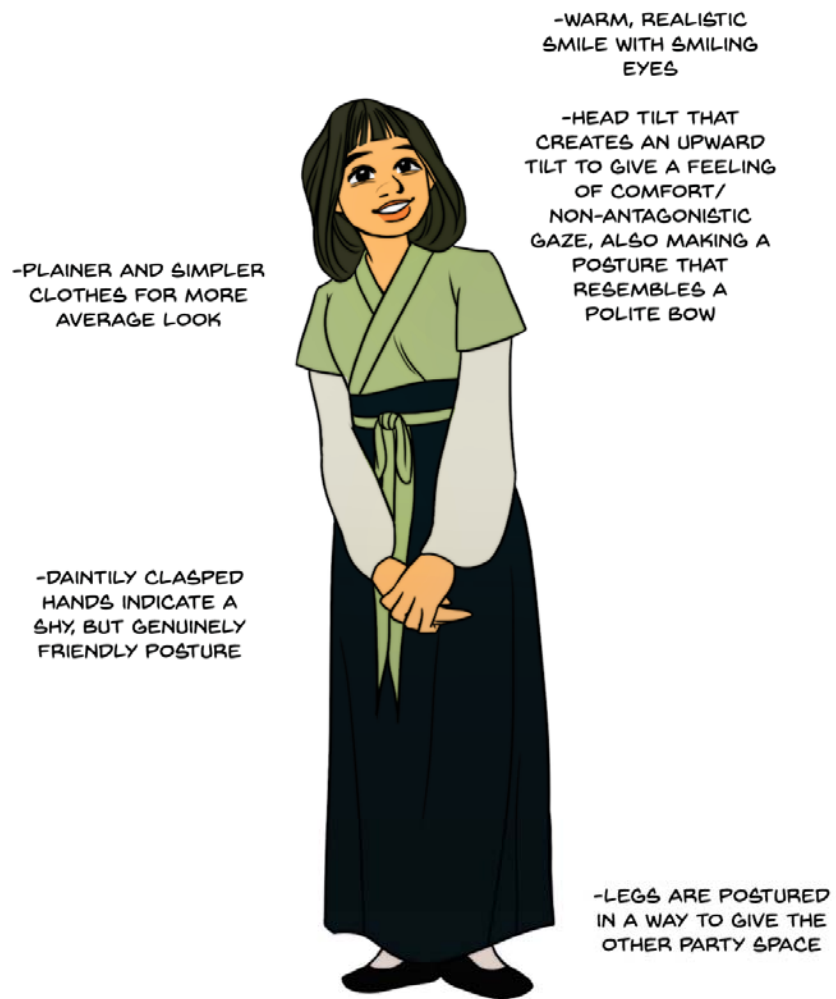


Figure 5.6: Medieval Chinese Girl-Next-Door Breakdown

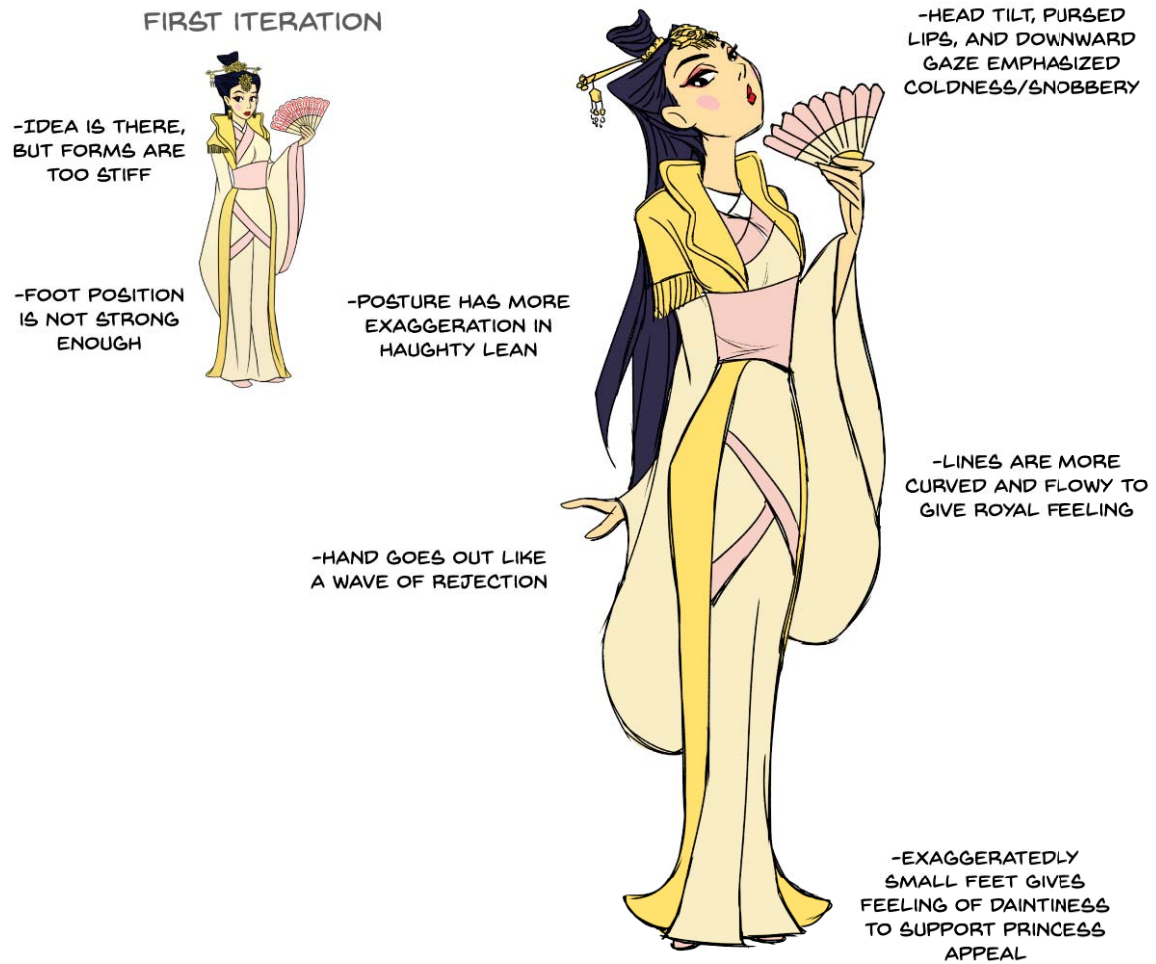


Figure 5.7: Medieval Chinese Cold/Princess/Snob Reevaluation + Final Breakdown

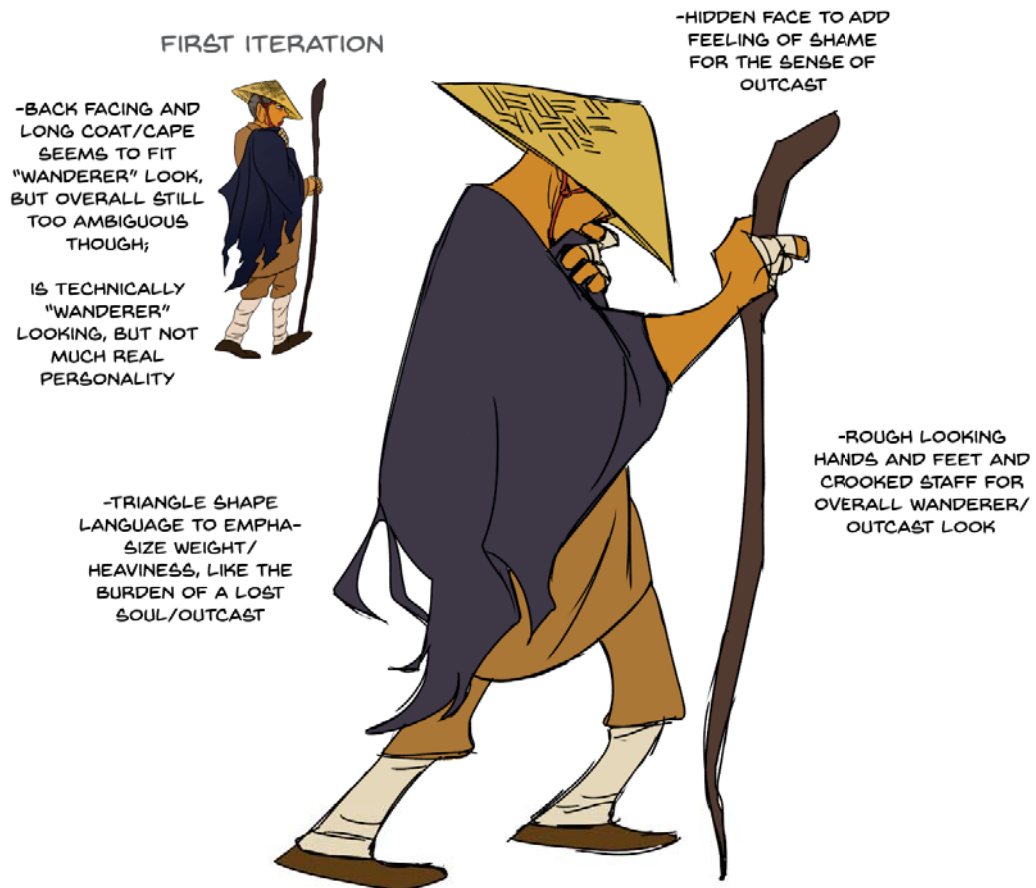


Figure 5.8: Medieval Chinese Lost Soul/Outcast/Wanderer Reevaluation + Final Break-down





Figure 5.9: Medieval Chinese Boss Breakdown



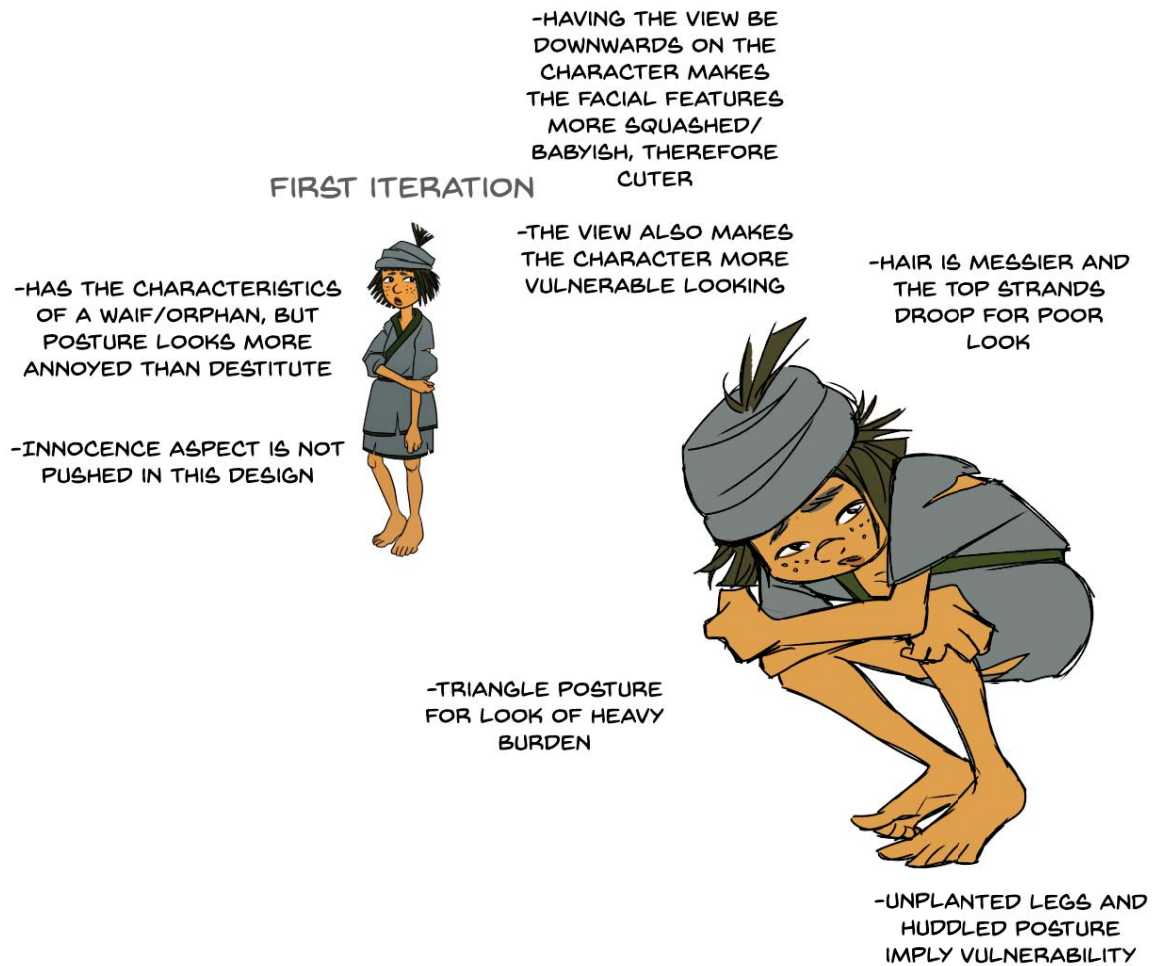


Figure 5.10: Medieval Chinese Innocent/Orphan/Waif Reevaluation + Final Breakdown

## **5.2 Action-Focused Designing**

When selling the action of a character, it is crucial to have the action be immediately readable and also maintain consistency in the personality described throughout the rest of the design choices. Using eight literary archetypes performing skating and driving sports, I explain how to analyze through a variety of motions that are both readable and describe a personality.



Figure 5.11: Ice Skating Dark Lady/Seductress/Siren Breakdown



Figure 5.12: Roller Blading Comedian/Darling/Free-Spirit Breakdown



Figure 5.13: Skateboarding Spunky Kid Breakdown



Figure 5.14: Skateboarding Bad Boy/Outlaw/Rebel Breakdown



Figure 5.15: Roller Blading Best Friend/Confidant/Mr. Nice Guy Breakdown



Figure 5.16: Ice Skating Crusader/Rescuer/Zealot Breakdown



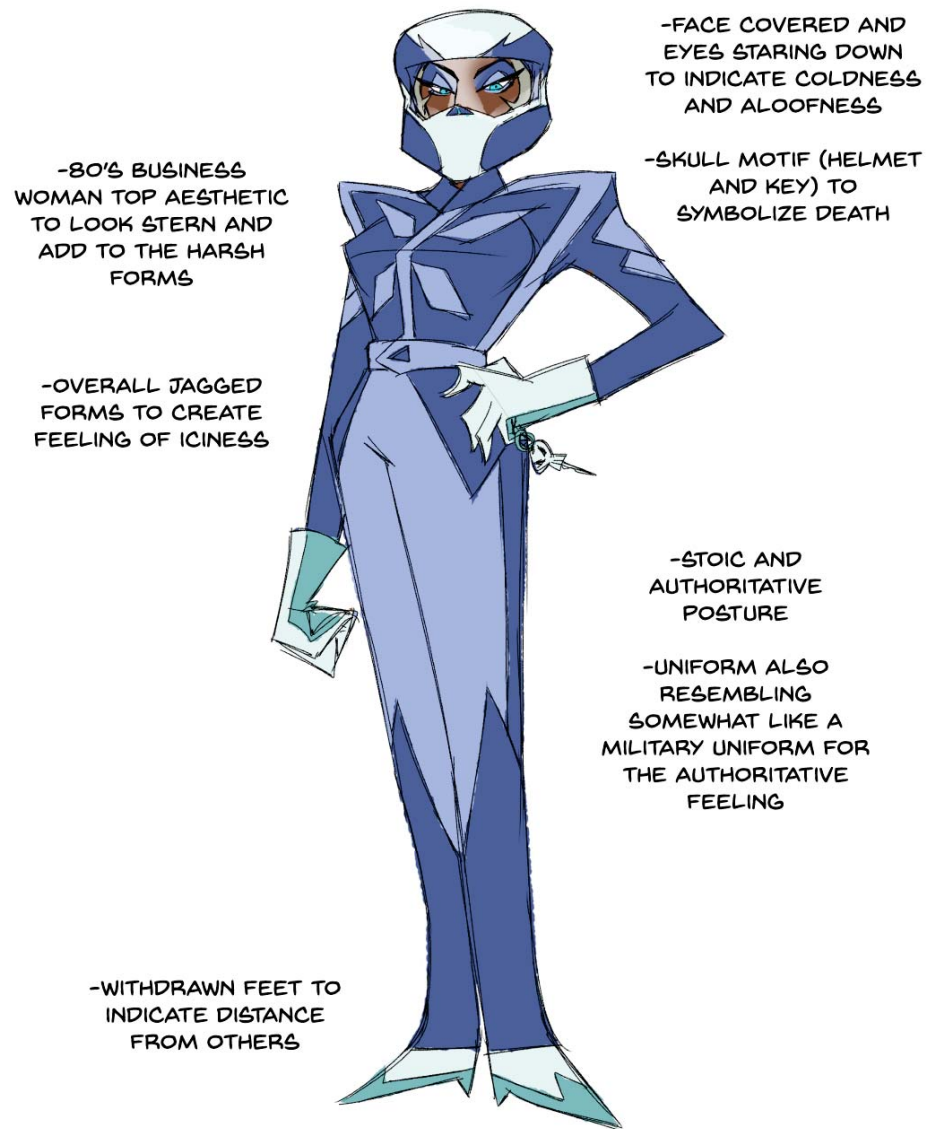


Figure 5.17: Racecar Driver Ice Breakdown



Figure 5.18: Racecar Driver Fire Breakdown

### **5.3 Off-the-Ground Posturing**

In my methodology as well much of the archetypes I have explored thus far, using the planted foot and a standing line of action has been an important part to indicating personality. However, there is definitely times where a character is posed off the ground, and it is important to still emphasize on the same feeling of weight despite no clear or even present planted foot to carry the line of action. Using six literary archetypes performing riding activities, I explain how to deal with the posturing of characters who sit off the ground.



Figure 5.19: Motorcyclist Caregiver/Nurturer/Wise Woman Breakdown

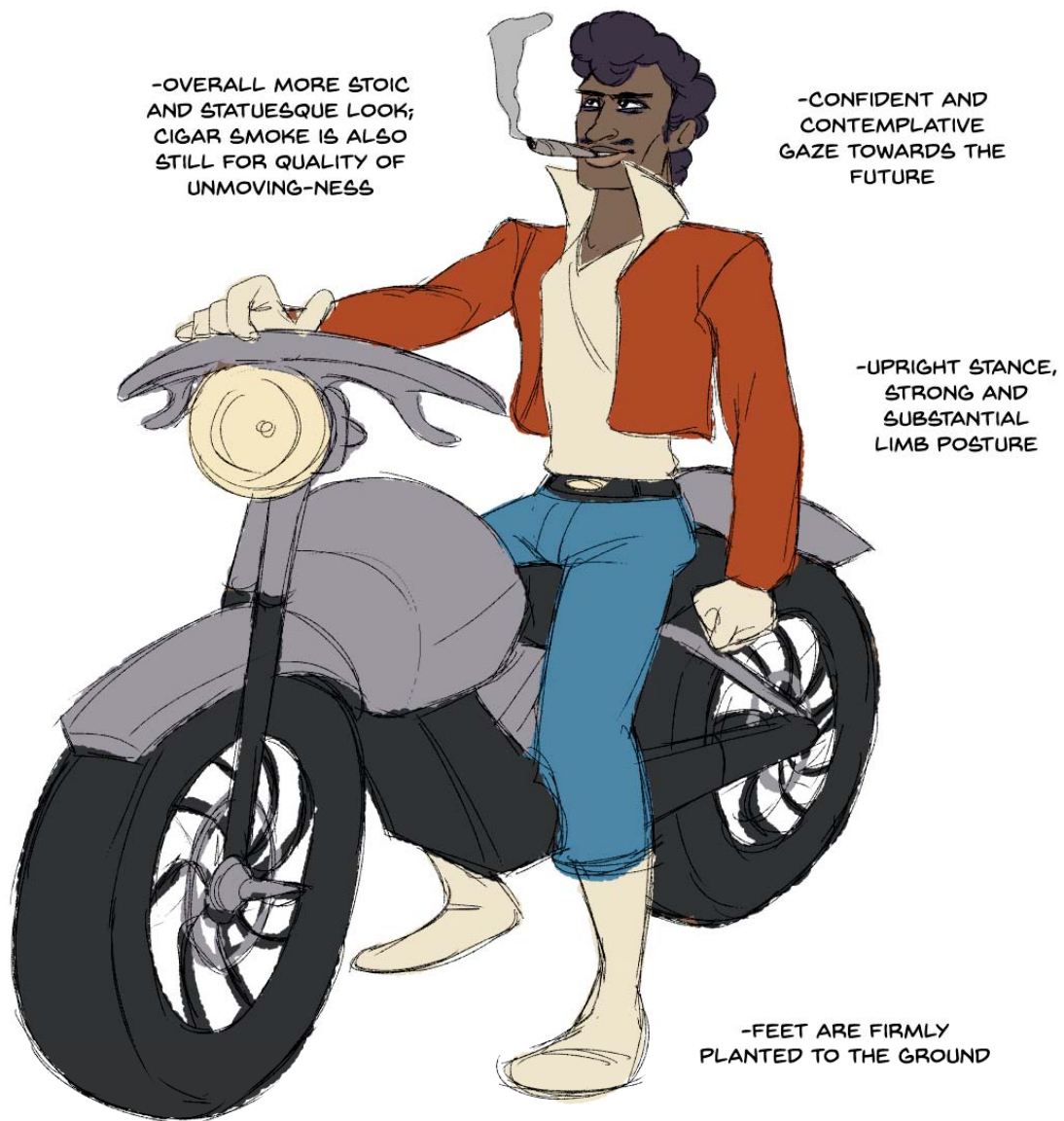


Figure 5.20: Motorcyclist Leader Breakdown

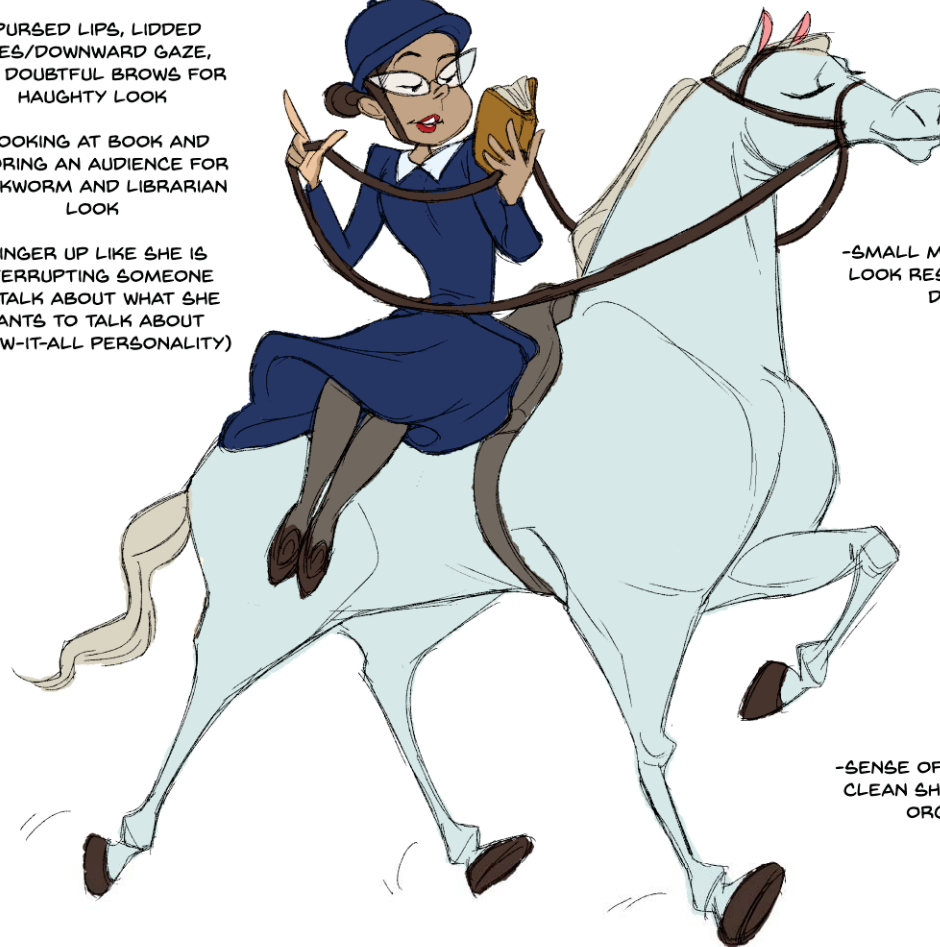


Figure 5.21: Bicyclist Working Girl Breakdown

-PURSED LIPS, LIDDED EYES/DOWNWARD GAZE, AND DOUBTFUL BROWS FOR HAUGHTY LOOK

-LOOKING AT BOOK AND IGNORING AN AUDIENCE FOR BOOKWORM AND LIBRARIAN LOOK

-FINGER UP LIKE SHE IS INTERRUPTING SOMEONE TO TALK ABOUT WHAT SHE WANTS TO TALK ABOUT (KNOW-IT-ALL PERSONALITY)



-SMALL MOVEMENTS TO LOOK RESTRAINED AND DAINY

-SENSE OF STABILITY AND CLEAN SHAPES TO FEEL ORGANIZED

Figure 5.22: Side Saddling Bookworm/Know-it-All/Organized/Librarian Breakdown





Figure 5.23: Jockey Avenger/Knight Breakdown



## **5.4 Results**

The resulting proofs provide an additional resource to addressing more specific design problems. Addressing these design problems through making sure they support the clear description of archetypes also provides a template to addressing any other specific design problems. Ultimately, strong and recognizable character designs rise from thorough analysis, comparisons, and iterations.

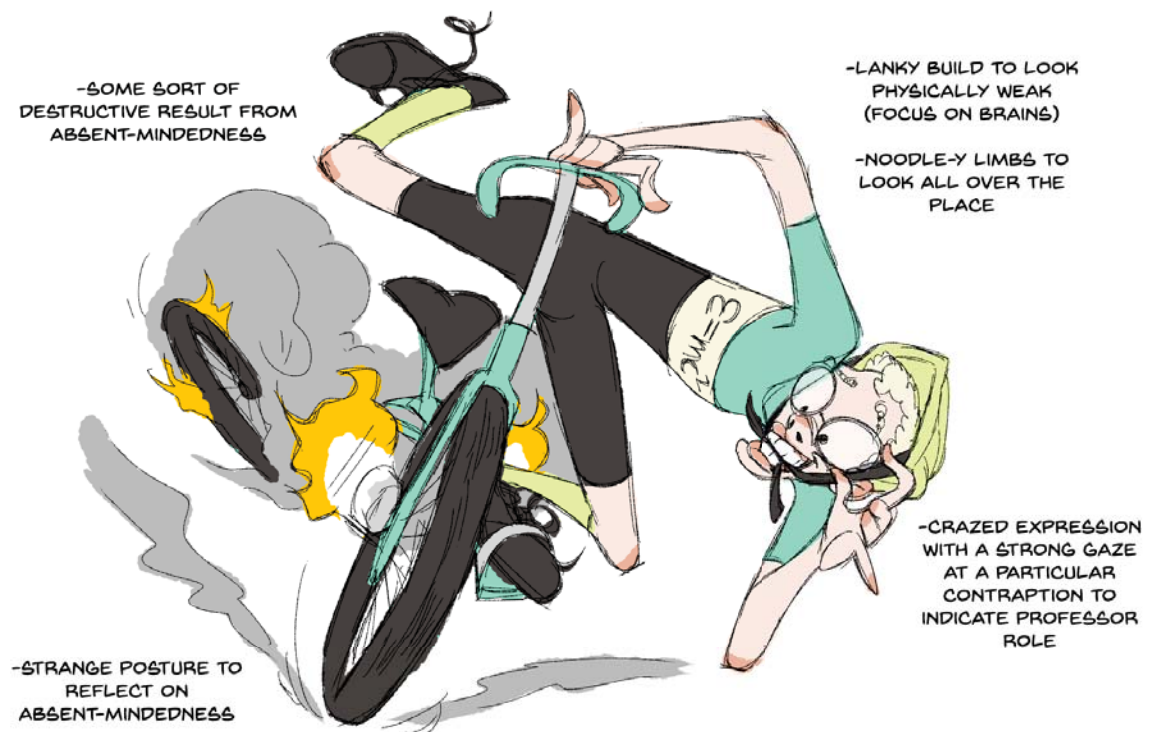


Figure 5.24: Bicyclist Absent-Minded/Professor Breakdown

## 6. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE WORK

### 6.1 Conclusion

Having a standardized methodology allows for better accessibility and greater understanding of the core elements in character designing. It allows artists to explain their design choices in a more explicit manner to a professional audience. This resulting proofs of the methodology also provide solid starting points to reference for a variety of personalities and archetypes.

### 6.2 Further Study

While the current stage of the research provides a solid foundation of a standard to character designing, more detailed research needs to be explored in every section of the methodology. The methodology provides a good generalized explanation of why various design choices work, but elements like proportioning of specific features, aesthetic flow, and form can definitely be expanded on. Expanding beyond humanoid characters and adding personality and appeal to other creature designs or even prop and environment design is worthy of its own field.

Gender perception is also a big topic that was largely avoided in this paper. My methodology was designed under the assumption that gendered elements are a non-factor to creating a strong design; however, it is clear that many major media studios actually do account gender in designs, and having a discussion on the psychological reasoning to make gender an important factor in designing is an important discussion in regards to the relationship between media and societal norms.

Furthermore, it is also be more useful to have a larger group of professional designers to contribute to the research ideas as well. Hopefully providing a solid foundation encourages further academic research on the subject of character designing.

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